TELLERS OF TALES by W. Somerset Maugham

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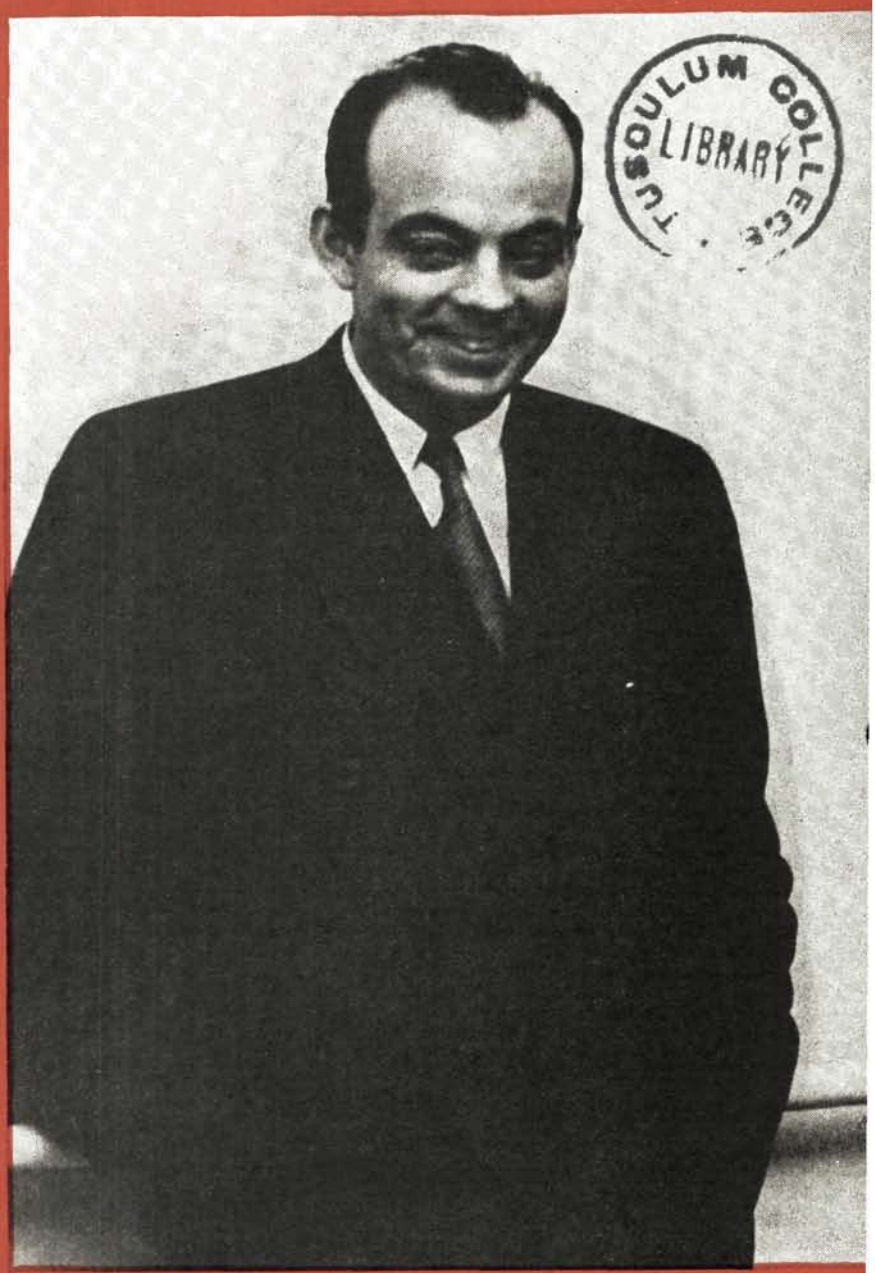

Antoine de Saint Exupéry: "The most articulate airman in the sky" . . .
(See page 3)

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Maupassant "demands a suspension of disbelief."

TELLERS OF TALES

BY W. SOMERSET MAUGHAM

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Tolstoy invented, Chekhov developed, the Russian story.

A WRITER treating of the art he pursues is biased. He very naturally thinks his own practice best. He writes as he can, and as he must, because he is a certain sort of man; he has his own parts, and his own idiosyncrasy, so that he sees things in a manner peculiar to himself, and he gives his vision the form that is forced upon him by his nature. He requires a singular vigor of mind to sympathize with work that is antagonistic to all his instincts. One should be on one's guard when one reads a novelist's criticisms of other people's novels. He is apt to find that excellent which he is aiming at himself and he is likely to see little merit in qualities that he does not himself possess. One of the best books on the novel that has been published in recent years is by an admirable writer who has never in his life been able to devise a plausible story. I was not surprised to find that he held in small esteem the novelists whose great gift is that they can lend a thrilling verisimilitude to the events they relate. I do not blame him for this. Tolerance is a very good quality in a man: if it were commoner, the world of today would be a more agreeable place to live in than it is; but I am not so sure that it is so good in a writer. For what in the long run has the writer to give you? Himself. It is well that he should have breadth of vision, for life in all its extent is his province; but he must see it not only with his own eyes, he must apprehend it with his own nerves, his own heart, and his own bowels; his knowledge is partial, of course, but it is distinct, because he is himself and not somebody else. His attitude is definite and characteristic. If he really feels that any other point of view is as valid as his own, he will hardly hold his own with energy and is unlikely to present it with force. It is commendable that a man should see that there are two sides to a question; but the writer face to face with the art he practises (and his view of life is of course part of his art) can only attain this standpoint by an effort of ratiocination: in his blood and his bones he feels that it is not six of one and half a dozen of the other, but twelve on his side and on the other nothing. This unreasonableness would be most unfortunate if writers were few, or if the influence of one were so great as to compel the rest to conformity; but there are thousands of us. Each one of us has his little communication to make, a restricted one, and from all these communications the readers can choose, according to their own inclinations and their own experience of life, what suits them.

I have said all this to clear the ground. I like best the sort of story I can myself write. This is the sort of story that many people have written well and none more excellently than Maupassant, so I cannot do better, to show exactly what it is, than to discuss one of his most famous productions, "The Necklace." One thing you will notice about it is that you could tell it over the dinner table or in a ship's smoking room and hold the attention of your listeners. At the base of it is an anecdote. It relates an incident which is curious, striking, and original. But of course it is much more than an anecdote, for when you know this you can read the story with as much interest as before. The scene is set before you with brevity, as the medium requires, but with clearness; and the persons concerned, the kind of life they lead and their deterioration, are shown you with just the amount of detail that is needed to make the circumstances of the case plain. You are told everything that you should know about them. From this appears the second excellence of this sort of story; when you have read it to find out what happens, you can read it again for the cleverness of the telling. "The Necklace" is not from its own standpoint perfect, for this kind of narrative should have a beginning, a middle, and an end; and when the end is reached the whole story should have been told and you should neither wish nor need to ask a further question. Your crossword is filled up. But in this case Maupassant satisfied himself with an end that was ironic and effective. The practical reader can hardly fail to ask himself, what next? It is true that the unfortunate couple had lost their youth and most of what makes life pleasant in the dreary years they had passed saving money to pay for the lost necklace; but when they discovered that it was worthless they might very well have claimed the real one with which they had replaced it and then found themselves in possession of a small fortune. In the aridity of spirit to which their sacrifices had brought them, it might very well have seemed a satisfactory compensation. It is a tribute to Maupassant's skill that few readers remain so self-possessed that the objection occurs to them. This brings me to the third characteristic of this kind of story. The author does not copy life; he arranges it in order the better to interest, excite, and surprise. He demands from you a willing suspension of disbelief.

This has caused the sort of narrative with which I am now dealing to fall of late years into some discredit. People say that in real life things do not happen with this neatness; real life is an affair of broken threads and loose ends: to arrange them into a pattern falsifies. Such an author as

Next Week

ARCHIBALD MACLEISH
By JOHN CHAMBERLAIN

NEBRASKA COAST
By CLYDE BRION DAVIS
Reviewed by James Gray

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Maupassant does not mind; he is not aiming at a transcription of life, but at a dramatization of it. He is willing to sacrifice plausibility to effect, and the test is whether he can get away with it: if he has so shaped the incidents he describes and the persons concerned in them that you are conscious of the violence he has put on them, he has failed. But that he sometimes fails is no argument against the method. I am disposed to think that the desire to tell stories and to listen to them is inherent in the human race. At some periods readers exact a close adherence to the facts of life as they know them—it is then that realism is in fashion; at others, indifferent to this, they ask for the strange, the unusual, the marvelous —these are periods that historians of literature call romantic; and then, so long as they are held, readers are willing to accept pretty well anything. They are willing to accept "Sindbad the Sailor" and "Monsieur Beaucaire." In fiction probability changes with the inclinations of the time; it is what you can get your readers to swallow. No one has stated the canons of the kind of story which I am now discussing with more precision than Edgar Allan Poe. But for its length I would quote in full his review of Hawthorne's "Twice-Told Tales;" it says everything that is to be said on the matter. It is, however, so well known that I can content myself with a short extract.

> A skillful literary artist has constructed a tale. If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived, with deliberate care, a certain unique or single effect to be brought out, he then invents such incidents—he then combines such effects as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tend not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the preëstablished design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length painted which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction. The idea of the tale has been presented unblemished, because undisturbed. . . .

With this declaration to help one I think it is possible to frame a definition of what Poe meant by a good short story: it is a piece of fiction, dealing with a single incident, material or spiritual, that can be read at a sitting; it is original, it must sparkle, excite, or impress; and it must have unity of effect or impression. It should move in an even line from its exposition to its close.

But there are a great many excellent stories which by these canons would have to be condemned. Now the critic does not prescribe laws for the artist; he takes note of his common practice and from this deduces rules; but when an original talent breaks them, the critic, though he may jib like the devil, in the end is forced to change his rules to accommodate the novelty. It is evident that there are other ways than Poe's of writing a good story.

People grow tired even of good things. They want change. In the short story naturalism in the nineteenth century came into fashion in reaction to a romanticism that had become tedious. One after the other writers attempted to portray life with unflinching veracity. "I have never truckled," said Frank Norris, "I never took off the hat to fashion and held it out for pennies. By God! I told them the Truth. They liked it or they didn't like it. What had that to do with me? I told them the Truth, I knew it for the Truth then, and I know it for the Truth now." (These are brave words. But it is hard to tell what the truth is; it is not necessarily the opposite of what you know to be a lie.) Writers of this school looked upon life with less partial eyes than those of the generation that had preceded them; they were less sugary and less optimistic, more violent and more direct; their dialogue was more natural and they chose their characters from a world that since the days of Defoe writers of fiction had somewhat neglected; but they made no innovations in technique. So far as the essentials of the short story are concerned, they were content with the old models. The effects they pursued were still those that had been pursued by Poe; they used the formula he had laid down. Their merit proves its value; their artificiality exposes its weakness.

But there was a country in which the formula had little prevailed. In Russia they had been writing for a couple of generations stories of quite another order; and when the fact forced itself upon the attention both of readers and of authors that the kind of story that had so long found favor was grown tediously mechanical, it was discovered that in that country there was a body of writers who had made of the short story something new and vital. I would not offer it as a dogmatic statement but merely as a suggestion that the inventor of the Russian story as we know it was Tolstoy. In "The Death of Ivan Ilyich" is a great deal more than the germ of all the Russian stories that have been written since. It comprehends all the merits and all the defects of the Russian story.

It is singular that it took so long for this variety of the brief narrative, not to reach the Western world, for the stories of Turgeniev were read in French translations when the Goncourts were writing their journal, but to have any effect on it. About 1905 I was in Paris, where Arnold Bennett was then living. He was widely read in modern literature and was always alert for anything new within the field of his interests. He knew the work of Tolstoy and Turgeniev, and his admiration for it, though discriminating, was great; but I do not think that he found in it anything that was personally important to him as a writer. It was another matter when he read Chekhov; in him he found something that very definitely affected him. A writer of short stories himself, he saw in the Russian's impressive achievement new life for an exhausted form. Since then the prestige of the Russian writers in general, and of Chekhov in particular, has been immense. It has to a large extent transformed the composition and the appreciation of short stories. Critical readers turn away with indifference from the story that is technically known as well made, and the writers who produce it still, for the delectation of the great mass of the public, are little considered. The stories that Maupassant wrote in France, Rudyard Kipling in England, and Bret Harte in America have come to be regarded with some disdain. Today most young writers of ambition model themselves on Chekhov, and magazines are issued, for even stories of this kind are dependent

(*Continued on page* 15)

The Boughs of Love

BY CHARLOTTE WILDER

(*"Take my hand, quick, and tell me*
What have you, in your heart"—
—A. E. HOUSMAN)

HOW tender-hearted are the good,
They live among the boughs of love,
As birds, given singing by their life,
Or grasses, draining from the wood

That forms their soil, a slender reed,
Pure, straight, and O, alive with spring,
The spring their season, and their day,
Because they live to bloom alway;

To bloom or sing; they give us joy,
Their being is a gentle stand
Out of the dusk and swamp, for they
Travail with light, to win its ray,

And sing or bloom, in every land;
And some are men, who take our hand.

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Pioneers of the Airlanes

WIND, SAND AND STARS. By Antoine de Saint Exupéry. Translated by Lewis Galantière. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1939. 306 *pp.* $2.75. (*Published June* 20.)

Reviewed by BRUCE GOULD

THE charm of this fractional autobiography of the most articulate airman in the sky (Anne Lindbergh, I suppose, is the most articulate airwoman) lies not so much in the fact that Exupéry is a man of action as that he is a reflective man.

Occasionally, he will congeal the never very hot blood of armchair adventurers with some such casual phrase as "In those days [1926] our planes frequently fell apart in mid-air." A remark, incidentally, so unimportant that it did not even begin a paragraph. But, for the most part, he calms our spirits while recounting the most hair-raising incidents of what sometimes happened to those men who, like Exupéry, have been pioneering airlanes around the world.

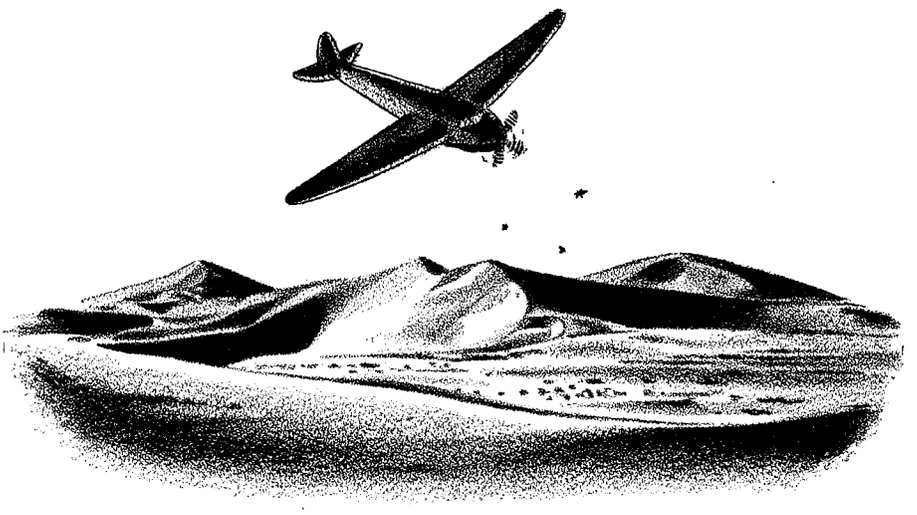
Most of the stories of those really dauntless men will be lost. Not every airman, alas, who can handle a stick through typhoon, night, and snowstorm has any way of recreating those sublime and terrifying moments for posterity. Our American flyers are given to such laconicisms as Eddie Stinson's classic description of—in the early days—a good landing: "Any one you can walk away from." And Exupéry has preserved for us the equally laconic remark of the estimable Guillaumet—returned miraculously to life after crashing in the snow-covered Andes and fighting for a week to emerge. A speech, Exupéry observes, admirable in its human pride: "I swear that what I went through, no animal would have gone through."

But Exupéry excels in his recognition of the part the airplane will play in human relations, of the fact that it will inevitably bring us all together in one room. "The central struggle of men," he observes, "has ever been to understand one another, to join together for the common weal. And it is this very thing that the machine helps them to do. It begins by annihilating time and space." It is also true, as someone less patient than Exupéry will point out, that this bringing together of people in one room frequently merely results in the hand-to-hand fighting of our current series of undeclared wars. But that is only at first. It may take a hundred and fifty years for a King George of England to visit American shores in peace and amity, but he eventually comes and his stay is as pleasant as his coming was swift.

So much for the world philosophy of the book, a philosophy curiously widespread among airmen of all nations, who, though they will obey orders as good soldiers while the rest of the militant world is catching up with their philosophy, are among the friendliest companions in the world and never bother two seconds over the fact that one man may have been born half across the globe from the other. For, as things go nowadays, that may have been only twenty-four hours away.

But if philosophy leaves you cold, Exupéry will not bore you. His philosophy, anyway, is more a point of view than a thesis. You need hardly be aware of it as you penetrate with him strange places on land and in the sky, and with the aid of his amazingly perspicacious eye see with equal clarity into the heart of man and nature.

It was, I think, the frequently astute George Jean Nathan who observed that no one had ever been able to write badly about the sea. That, alas, is not true of the equally mysterious and pervasive air which, as yet, has had no Conrads, Melvilles, Masefields to create and make rich a literature of the skyways. But there are occasional stories by a Kipling, a Kessel, a Bellah, a Mrs. Lindbergh, which are beginning to create such a literature. And this book, though it is not a continued narrative, and is uneven in the merit of its contents, gives added reason why Exupéry heads the list of current writers of wind, sand, and stars.



Jacket design, by J. O'H. Cosgrave II, for "Wind, Sand and Stars"

Bruce Gould, editor of The Ladies' Home Journal, *was formerly aviation editor of the* New York Evening Post.

Precise Nonsense

EDWARD LEAR: LANDSCAPE PAINTER AND NONSENSE POET. By Angus Davidson. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co. 1939. 280 *pp., with index.* $3.75.

Reviewed by LOUIS UNTERMEYER

EDWARD LEAR is undergoing a double reincarnation. After having enjoyed a long popularity as childhood's madcap laureate, he is now being seriously appreciated by the painters and even more seriously appraised by the poets. The purity of Lear's lyrical gift has been commended by T. S. Eliot, and Robert Graves has found unsuspected emotional depths in such songs as "Calico Pie," whose birds suggest "the familiar emblem of unrealized love," and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose," which seems to Mr. Graves "as tragic as the Greek legend of Cadmus seeking his lost Europa."

Mr. Davidson—am I wrong in believing him to be Lear's first biographer?—mentions neither Eliot nor Graves, but there is only a little in his book to indicate he considers the fooling of Edward Lear as a disguise for King Lear. Mr. Davidson writes soberly but not stodgily of a Lear unknown both to lovers of limericks and to the countless thousands who cannot forget "The Owl and the Pussy-Cat." From Mr. Davidson's pages there emerges a restless and melancholy man; a painter who hated the act of painting, yet whose accuracy was such that experts could recognize the geology of the country from Lear's drawings; a water-colorist of extraordinary industry and spontaneity—one of his friends inherited over ten thousand designs at Lear's death—and of an essentially English quality, but an artist who has never received just recognition; a victim of epilepsy from the age of seven who lived to be seventy-six; a serious student who luxuriated in a life of nonsense.

Although the chief value of Mr. Davidson's work is its carefully assembled information, the book is not

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Edward Lear: from a drawing by William Holman Hunt, 1857.

without critical value. Nor is it without sprightliness. The reader is continually coming upon amusing and unsuspected data. He learns, for example, that Lear's grandfather was a Dane and spelled his name "Lor" with a line through and two dots over the o, and that the equivalent in Greek means nothing more nor less than "nonsense." The academe may be surprised to discover that Queen Victoria engaged Lear as her drawing-teacher, and the admirer of Lear's superbly comic Thurberesque drawings will certainly be astounded to find out that, after studying with Holman Hunt, Lear considered himself one of the Pre-Raphaelites. Those who remember the author of "The Yonghy-Bonghy-Bo" as the inventor of absurd words will scarcely recognize him as the lithographer of "Illustrations of the Family of Psittacidae," a work which brought favorable comparisons with Audubon.

But the book is more than a set of revaluations. It is a broadly human document. Lear's indescribable charm is here, his curious bachelordom which combined a love of children with a fear of women, his success as an amateur composer and singer—when he sang his setting of Tennyson's "Home they brought her warrior dead," his audience told him he deserved half the Laureateship—his most revealing letters, and records of his travels which unconsciously betray the parochial puritan.

Mr. Davidson's biography has the final virtue of implication. He makes us realize that the two great English masters of nonsense were also masters of cadence, and that the maddest verbal music was perfected by a topographical landscape-painter and his successor who, when not disguised as Lewis Carroll, was a university lecturer, a precise mathematician, and a deacon in holy orders.

Our Air Defenses

BOMBS BURSTING IN AIR: The Influence of Air Power on International Relations. By Major George Fielding Eliot. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1939. 173 *pp., with index.* $1.75.

Reviewed by Major John H. Burns

MAJOR GEORGE FIELDING ELIOT, who by past writings appears to be able to make military matters plain to the American people—a most difficult task—deals with the question of air power with marked success. His first chapter on some fundamentals of war could be read by anyone with great profit, even some soldiers, judging by their writings.

However, one cannot agree with his statement that there are but three revolutionary military inventions: discipline, gunpowder, and the airplane. There are many such inventions—the bow, the sword, bronze, iron, armor, and the like. Furthermore, what occurred after gunpowder was discovered was not due to gunpowder, but to the rise of the soldier, who had been dead for a thousand years. He took the place of the medieval warrior. However, such remarks are in a sense captious, for Major Eliot, stepping into the field of military aviation, shows a clear grasp of his subject. He steers clear of the Douhet fanatics who consider air power everything, and wide of the crusty soldier who believes airplanes are only slightly valuable and in general a damned nuisance.

His analysis of the European aerial situation seems sound. He shows starkly why the Munich agreement was signed. As he sees it:

> It is not therefore to be wondered at that there was fear in London during the suspense period of the Munich crisis. . . . That is not to say, by any means, that the British people would not have supported their government had resistance to German demands been decided on last autumn, or will not if in some future crisis a like determination shall be taken. What is contended is simply that they did not *force* the government to take a firmer stand, that Hitler could in fact pretty well count on there being no immediate public reaction against the government's surrender; and that the fear of being bombed had a great deal to do with this quiescence.

What happens when cities are deluged with bombs? Will the civilian morale crack? Who can tell? Judging from Barcelona, Major Eliot feels there is a definite chance that it will. Furthermore, the present dictator powers have a certain supremacy, and considering the potential destructiveness of their air power, can and do promote their policies by "blackmail." How correct Major Eliot's table of European air strengths may be, no one can say. Such things are not being offered for publication.

Turning to the American situation, he shows how two oceans guard us, how difficult it is to reach us, and yet what approaches we must protect, and the air fleet we must have. He indicates how the Caribbean must be covered—which is quietly being done, by the way—and how the islands of the Atlantic and Pacific coast must be woven into a protective aerial barrier. The structure he outlines is clear and appears vitally necessary, even though there be some arguments about the details of the plan. Strangely enough, he indicates that dominating sea power will ultimately pass to this country, and shows how the land aviation must be woven into our sea defense.

One may disagree with certain of his conclusions, but it appears that in general he has pointed out with clarity what we must do in the future to be safe. Air power is one growing factor whose place and might is hard to judge. Major Eliot in this short book has made a start.

John H. Burns, Major, Infantry, U. S. A., is editor of The Infantry Journal.

"Mankind of Insects"

OF ANTS AND MEN. By Caryl P. Haskins. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1939. 244 *pp. with index.* $2.75.

Reviewed by Donald Culross Peattie

IF any one living can possibly write a better popular book than this on the polity and perversions, the instincts and nascent intelligences of the ant heap, let him dip his pen forthwith, for, to my taste, there can never be too many good books about "the mankind of insects." Solomon and Aristotle gazed on the ant heap from the heights of their respective and proverbial wisdoms, and marveled. William Morton Wheeler, my old entomology teacher, was among the wittiest as well as the profoundest of writers on ants. Maeterlinck, no scientist admittedly, turned out an absorbing little volume on them.

Dr. Haskins has upheld the tradition. He has collected ants all over North America, and in the tropics of America, Asia, and Africa. He has more than a hundred nests under close scrutiny all the time. If any one should know about ants, it is he. He shows the immense range of pismire cultures, from nomadism to the pastoral stage, and on through the harvester stage and the intensive agricultural stage, to increasingly effete levels of slave-holding (to which the slaves make a strikingly masochist

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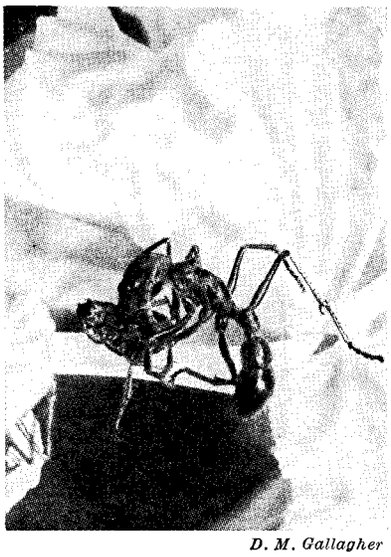
response), and finally the most fantastic parisitism. Ant wars, ant fascism and communism, ant instinct, and even ant intelligence are in the field of his bold and easy discourse. It is a volume which I found myself compelled to read to the last page without a stop.

I am not sure how far orthodox sociology would support Dr. Haskins when he moralizes from the ant heap to the human mess, and back again. I'm told that it's thinking back with Herbert Spencer to speak categorically of men in the hunting stage, the pastoral stage, etc., and that sociology has been scrambling night and day to get as far from Spencer as possible. And I'm not sure, either, that political economists will accept his notions of fascism, communism, and democracy, as he employs the terms. Just possibly Dr. Haskins, like myself, sees one form of government and way of life as white, and others as black, while the realists tell us they are uniformly dingy.

But we shall all be interested in the implications behind his comparison of emmet and human polity. He finds that the American type of democracy represents a fairly youthful, because individualistic and unsocialized, stage of civil development, corresponding with some of the more primitive ant societies. To judge by the analogy of the formic host, however, it is fascism and communism which represent mature stages of social development (using "mature" as meaning "far gone"). Beyond this mature stage wait levels of social senescence in the way of slaveholding which we only approached for a few glamorous moments in Stark Young's Mississippi of 1860. When we get as far along as some of the ants we shall be too high-born and enervated even to feed ourselves, and will starve in the midst of plenty unless our slaves (our machines?) put comfits in our mouths. As for human militarism, if it follows the lines of formic militarism, we shall, after a highly martial and predatory period, have imposing-looking but atrophied weapons that we either cannot or will not use. Perhaps, it occurs to me, we shall all follow the lead of a certain statesman born ahead of his time, and flourish umbrellas instead of cutlasses.



D. M. Gallagher

The kill: ant with cockroach, caught in an orchid petal.

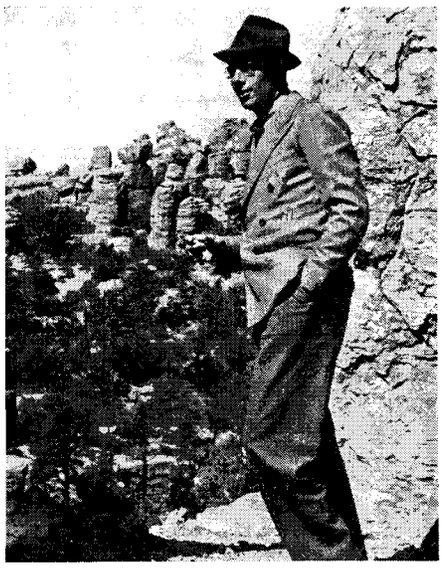
The Making of Virginia

GAMBLE'S HUNDRED. By Clifford Dowdey. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. 367 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

IN "Gamble's Hundred," Mr. Clifford Dowdey has taken an interesting and, and on the whole, rather neglected period in Virginia history and based upon it a sound and substantial novel. We all know about John Smith and we all know about Robert E. Lee, but in between—well, there was Bacon's Rebellion, of course, and the Revolution, and Jefferson—but, in spite of those names and facts, our knowledge is somewhat sketchy. And, if we were asked to say what changed the Virginia of the Virginia Company to the Virginia of the Civil War, I'm afraid our answers would be a trifle vague. But here, Mr. Dowdey has done a very interesting thing. He has taken the colony of the 1730s, the colony still in flux, with the ruling class yet in the making, and still, in many cases, on the make, and shown it as it was—together with the continual and irrepressible conflict between great and small, between tidewater and back-country, that runs through Virginia's history. And, so doing, he has done as accurate and admirable a job of surveying as his own hero, Christopher Ballard.

I feel that I am talking of the book in terms of history rather than in terms of fiction, and that is, perhaps, unfair. Mr. Dowdey tells a good story—his hero, Christopher Ballard, is one of those able technicians that the rich and well-born have to use, in any age. And, like many another technician, before and since, Christopher falls in love with splendor and a girl who embodies splendor, only to revolt against them both at last. It is a good story, and the narrative moves swiftly and surely to its conclusion. But what is most fascinating in the book is neither hero nor heroine, but Virginia itself—the growing colony, with its sharp contrasts of gay wealth and independent poverty—the big landowners crowding out the small planters—the men like Sidney Frane, resolved to be masters of Virginia by fair means or foul, and the families



Marshall Beauchamp

Clifford Dowdey "has done an accurate job of surveying" . . .

like the Kirbys, who knew, vaguely, that something was happening to them but did not know why it happened. All the roots of the South are here, and the problem is still valid for our own time. Except that, in the 1730s, Christopher Ballard and his girl could still go over the mountains and strike for the free and dangerous land. They cannot do that any more.

A stimulating novel, with sharply drawn contrasts of character, "Gamble's Hundred" is better unified than "Bugles Blow No More" and more swiftly written. The frail and lovely Evelyn Frane remains a symbol rather than a person, but both Christopher Ballard and Sidney Frane are alive. Indeed, the latter almost runs away with the book, as villains are apt to do. He is an entirely convincing character—the Man of Property in his own time as Soames Forsyte was in his. And, if he lacks the bite of Soames Forsyte—well, that is a question of writing. Mr. Dowdey writes well and unobtrusively—but his honesty of approach and his selection of material are still the most important things in his work. You wish, at times, that he would let himself go a little more—the defense of the Bastion of St. Gervais is, no doubt, entirely impossible history, but no one has ever read it and forgotten it. All the same, this is a well-built and admirable novel in the modern tradition. It will tell you something about the makings of America that most of us don't know or have forgotten—and give you a gripping and convincing story of human beings into the bargain.

Stephen Vincent Benét is the author of "John Brown's Body."

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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The Battle of the Books

YOU can stroke even a wild animal, unless you frighten him; then he will bite. The masses of men and women in the so-called civilized world have been frightened for the last ten years; their books, even their moving pictures, have not. That is a strange circumstance of the present, not often noticed. Our world has not been panicky, except in Germany under inflation, or in the bombed areas of 1938-1939, or in Europe generally last Autumn, where even in France and Great Britain, active fright was not far under the surface. But millions have been frightened as Americans have been since the depression and probably all sensitive people in the world for a decade now, which means uneasy, suspicious, self-distrustful, afraid for their jobs or their comforts or their childrens' future.

Fright, active or passive, was the steady condition of the earlier world, except for briefest periods of assurance. You can read it in the words of the litany, see it painted into the great religious pictures of the Christian tradition, find it described in every history. The peasant was always a little afraid, and so was the knight.

The short-term reaction was violence, the sudden violence of knife-thrust, pistol shot, treachery, and rebellion, which had so generally disappeared from our society, except among groups which were themselves essentially afraid—gangsters, thieves, racketeers.

The long-term reaction was intolerance. Every village regarded every other village as "foreign," every city distrusted every other city, every race or nation thought every other race or nation was treacherous, wicked, inhuman. The Gothic West of Europe thought that the more cultivated East of the Greek empire was degenerate, traitorous, a polluted and a polluting race and nation. Even the hearty English novels of the eighteenth century are full of contempt and intolerance for the French, who were rivals, outlanders, different in their ways, and so alien and dangerous.

It is unnecessary to point the moral. Europeans, and particularly those countries that suffered most during and after the war, have fallen back into self-distrust and fear of the alien. Every speech of Hitler states hysterically the superiority of the German to other races and nations, and the need of protecting the Reich against strangers, inside and outside of its boundaries. The bunk about racial purity and national purity is not new—it is as old as humanity and springs from exactly the same causes which have always produced intolerance—the dangers threatening the racial group, the fear, and hence the hatred of those not in the group, who, if feared and hated, can be held responsible for failures at home as well as menace from abroad. This new intolerance, so strong in Europe, and already aroused in America, is one of the plagues that have always been just around the corner in human history. Stop sanitation and the black death will be here again; renew fear of the alien and you get intolerance.

There is one antiseptic against these bacteria of fear and intolerance spreading through the world, and that is, fortunately, easily available in literature. The wise, the good, and the most competent writers of the post-war period have not gone back to the dark ages. There has never been a more impressive testimony to the need and possibility of tolerance than in the important books, in all the great languages, written since 1918. Galsworthy, Wells, Hardy, Shaw, Mann, Remarque, Romains, Undset, Lewis, Buck, Cather, Dreiser, Santayana, O'Neill, Ortega, Croce, Zweig—the list could be tripled of writers in all countries, who, however they differ otherwise in philosophies, have devoted their finest energies to a better understanding of the differences among men. That kind of romance which made triumphing over "inferior" breeds of men romantic, has almost disappeared, even from the movies. It is hard to see how any intelligent person, reading the twenty best books written in the last twenty years, could fail to emerge with a mind cleaned and cleared of the ancient slime of intolerance and ignorant jealousy and lurking fear of the stranger. Not that this alone would solve the world's problems, which are much too complex to be set right quickly, even by good will.

And yet in this time of backsliding, it is well to remember that substantially all the important poets and playwrights and novelists, and all the journalists who are more than hacks or propaganda writers, are on one side—all defenders of tolerance and understanding and belief in the common traits of humanity, which are good as well as evil. Against the persuasive ignorance, and hatred based on fear, and special pleading, of a "Mein Kampf," there is an array of witnesses that only need to be known in order to be heard.

H. S. C.

Archibald MacLeish and the Library of Congress

THE opposition to the appointment of Archibald MacLeish as Librarian of Congress is understandable, but not any too well understood. Those who charge him with being a communist are, of course, talking nonsense, or using that familiar red herring for their own concealed ends. MacLeish is an outspoken liberal, a lover of humanity, a courageous fighter in good causes. If these are traits opposed by some in a candidate for the executive head of a great national library, so much the worse for their conception of the job and of the nature of their country.

The real question raised by MacLeish's appointment is much more concrete, and in answering it an honest difference of opinion is possible. Should the executive head of a great library be a librarian specializing in the technique of book-getting and book-keeping, or should he be an executive, broadly trained, who has demonstrated his scholarship, his ability to organize, and his capacity for representing a great storehouse of intellectual energy? Now library work has become as technical and as specialized as research in electricity or the production of automobile engines. The expert librarian is indispensable in a library, but by the very specialization of his training he has tended to become more and more the technical expert, and less and less the executive. The situation is almost exactly parallel to the problem of a General Electric Company or an American Telephone and Telegraph Company. It is the research men and the technicians who carry these great businesses; but executives, not themselves scientists, direct them. Granted that if a librarian, the product of a life-long specialization, could be found to direct the vast organism of the Congressional Library, he would be a good choice, but not necessarily a better choice than a scholar and executive who has made his mark as one of the leading contemporary minds, like Archibald MacLeish. Yale University, last year, faced the same problem, searched the library field and went outside of it to choose for university librarian a lawyer, who was also a scholar and an executive, with results, so far, conspicuously successful.

H. S. C.

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Letters to the Editor:

Mrs. Humphry Ward's Poem; A Reply to Crane Brinton

Pp.

SIR:—Stop me if you've heard this. I wonder if I am alone in wishing that in addition to the conventional announcement of a book's debut: Title, Author, Press, Price, you might add: Pp.

HAROLD F. SMITH.
Kalispell, Mont.

(*This practice is inaugurated in the current issue.*—ED.)

Emily Brontë and Mrs. Ward

SIR:—"Wuthering Heights," now imminent over northern Vermont, has had the curious effect of causing my mind to run on Mrs. Humphry Ward. It is one of Emily Brontë's posthumous triumphs that she moved Mary Augusta Arnold Ward, for the first and last time in her life, to verse. George Smith, Charlotte's publisher, printed the result in the *Cornhill Magazine* for February 1900. It is a sonnet addressed to Charlotte and Emily Brontë, and begins:

Pale sisters; reared amid the purple sea
Of windy moorland; where, remote, ye plied
All household arts, meek, passion-taught, and free,
Kinship your joy, and Fantasy your guide!—

Mrs. Ward's verse, one fears, would have as deleterious an effect on Rebecca West as her prose style, that style which "in the utter wrongness of all its ingredients," reminded Miss West of nothing so much as grocer's cake.

E. F. WALBRIDGE.
Montgomery, Vt.

"What's the Matter with Sociology?"

SIR:—I am rising to the bait, and submitting some comments on Crane Brinton's recent article on "What's the Matter with Sociology." It is a rash thing to do, for the subject is one in which the line between destructive truth and debonair generalization is thin and unstable. I am inclined to agree with the implication in Mr. Brinton's opening paragraph that the chief difficulty with sociology is its name. When you create a name, you create the thing of which it is an appellation, and I am afraid that there is no such thing as sociology. There is a scientific or philosophical attitude toward the phenomena of social life, and this attitude is "sociological." The observation of the innumerable ways by which human beings live in groups, and seek their satisfactions, provides the material for the social sciences or for the philosophical contemplation of human society. All this may be sociology. In that case, sociology is a family name for the social sciences and has some sense; and in that case economics is sociology; and political science certainly is, history is, law is, psychology is. So far, therefore, as there is anything the matter with "sociology," I agree with Mr. Brinton that it is chiefly in that it made itself a specialty: it built up its votaries and exponents who wear the distinctive colors of the special stable from which they make the race against their fellow social scientists.

The second and perhaps chief difficulty that troubles Mr. Brinton is the tendency of sociologists to be partisan. I should like to come back to this in a minute but would like first to look at the last dart directed against sociology, where Mr. Brinton says, "If the world is afire, the tiny nozzle of sociology pointed against it may look heroic, but the stream that emerges just doesn't carry far enough to do much good." If this refers to sociology as the special "ology," I fall in step with Mr. Brinton, but not otherwise: for example, I consider the Marxian doctrines as sociology. I would put anarchism and the political theories incorporated in present-day Italy or Germany in the same category—that is, that part which is theory. It so happens that these theories are also being carried out by entire national sovereignties but they are primarily sociological theory. No one would say that the streams issuing from these sociological nozzles are negligible forces—which brings me back to Mr. Brinton's second point, that the trouble with sociology is the tendency toward partisanship which prevents a truly scientific attitude and is correspondingly reflected in its literature.

I won't dwell on the fact that even the physical sciences have "schools of thought," diverse theories held by men who have access to the same data, the same laboratory procedures, and the same observations, and might be assumed to be guided by the same scientific motivations. Chiefly I wish not to dwell on this point because the disagreements may be technically assigned to variations in hypothesis and in inference rather than to diversity of motivations. We have comparable differences of opinion in the purely theoretical phases of sociology with their corresponding technical labels: accommodation, assimilation, conflict, consciousness of kind, etc. And while in this descriptive and hypothetical stage, partisanship is limited to the usual paper warfare among academicians with their seething polemics and mutual disdain. But when we issue from the purely descriptive area, we find that the significance of material in the social sciences arises not from their descriptive truth but from their meaning for the direction of human life and social objectives. That is why such seasoned scholars as Henry W. Farnam, who devote a life-

(*Continued on page* 19)

"I'll say business is good! We've been open only two days and we've already had an inquiry for a Gutenberg Bible!"

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Nobel the Prize-Giver

BY HARLAND MANCHESTER

Alfred Nobel: "he predicted that his high explosives would put an end to war sooner than peace meetings" . . .

ONE day in 1861 a group of Paris bankers gave impatient audience to a young man who said he had a big idea. Neither he nor his hearers connected his idea with an annual accolade to distinguished writers, yet today his name looms large in the field of literature. He was a Swede; a thin, sickly, nervous chap, with penetrating blue eyes and plenty of assurance.

"Messieurs," he announced dramatically, "I have an oil that will blow up the globe!"

The bankers jumped, but he produced no infernal machine, and calmly went on to explain his new explosive. Shortly his hearers cut him off. The whole thing was impossible, and anyway, who wanted the globe blown up?

When Napoleon III heard about the young Swede, however, he spoke to a financier, and Alfred Nobel went back to Stockholm with a draft for 100,000 francs. Within a year, he and his father were manufacturing nitroglycerin for commercial use. Soon the world was startled by a new word: dynamite. And the foundation was laid for the Nobel fortune, the income of which is now distributed annually to workers for peace, to scientists, and to gifted writers.

To Alfred Nobel, there was nothing sinister about powerful explosives. His father, Emmanuel Nobel, an architect turned inventor, had been tinkering with them for years, and had invented a naval mine used by Russia in the Crimean War.

Emmanuel's income varied as much as his ideas. Despite the patient efforts of Mrs. Nobel, the family was often in hot water. They moved a great deal, and not by choice. When the landlord wanted cash, Emmanuel showed him blue-prints. His enthusiasm was contagious, and sometimes the landlord forgot that the sketches were not legal tender. The year Alfred was born — 1833 — was one of those times when his father couldn't pay the rent. This time the creditors were not beguiled, and Emmanuel was thrown into bankruptcy.

Alfred was the third of four brothers, and the puniest of the lot. As a baby, he had convulsions, and for years his mother fought a constant battle to keep him alive. He had a weak spine, and when other children were playing, he sat on the sidelines and envied them. He had nervous headaches and a poor digestion, and was extremely sensitive to criticism.

Ludwig, the second son, was the apple of the old man's eye. Ludwig had genius, said Emmanuel, but Alfred worked harder. This talk got under Alfred's skin when at the age of seventeen his father sent him to New York to study a new heat engine invented by John Ericsson, who had migrated to New York and who was soon to revolutionize the world's navies with his iron-clad *Monitor*. He sailed willingly, but no one knows how long he stayed in the United States or what he did. Soon he was back in Europe, rambling aimlessly here and there. He explored Paris night life, turned from it in disgust, and met a young girl with whom he fell desperately in love. She died, and he walked the streets all night, saw the sun rise, and wrote a long, introspective poem which he was to treasure all his life and to read to people who seemed sympathetic.

At the age of twenty-one the prodigal returned to his father's factory. Bitter, disillusioned, and hardened, but cherishing secret ideals which seemed impossible of realization, he went resolutely to work, for work, he decided, was all that life held for him.

Emmanuel Nobel was already convinced that nitroglycerin had great possibilities as an explosive, though it was used then chiefly as a stimulant in heart ailments. Under certain conditions it would explode, but no one knew just what these conditions were. Sometimes a container of the stuff would fall to the ground with a thud, and nothing would happen; sometimes a small jolt would cause a shattering explosion.

Some time during Alfred's four unexplained years, he had picked up a good working knowledge of chemistry, draftsmanship, and mechanical engineering. Gradually he took the lead in the experiments, and arrived at the theory that the only sure way of exploding this soupish liquid was to confine it in a stout container and set it off with a sharp primary explosion. A match wouldn't explode nitroglycerin; it took force. He evolved the blasting cap—an invention still the basis of the whole nitroglycerin and dynamite industry.

After securing Louis Napoleon's help, Alfred and his father went hopefully to work, but nitroglycerin still would not behave. Neither Emmanuel nor Alfred was in the shop one morning in May, 1864. The youngest son, Emil, and four workmen were there. An explosion killed every one in the room instantly. Old Emmanuel was prostrated; he had a paralytic stroke from which he never recovered. He lingered for years, and from his bed or wheel-chair continued to turn out "inventions," which Mrs. Nobel faithfully recorded. Stockholm shook with terror at the news of the explosion. The Nobels had no permit to work with explosives, and the authorities cracked down. But meanwhile, engineers and miners everywhere heard of the new time-saving, money-saving blasting oil. Orders and inquiries came in from all over the world.

Alfred Nobel moved his plant to a barge moored in a lake. Within a year he had launched manufacturing companies in Sweden, Finland, Norway, and Germany, and the Swedish government was using his "soup" to blast a terminal railway tunnel under Stockholm. Chemist, manufacturer, bookkeeper, and salesman all in one,

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he hardly took time to eat, and succeeded in ruining his digestion for life. Men with money to invest wanted demonstrations. Handling nitroglycerin often gives people headaches, and it affected Nobel violently, but he would allow no one else to run the risk. He would show them, he said, that his blasting oil was safe.

He was too optimistic; nitroglycerin's reign of terror was about to begin. One morning in November, 1865, a Westphalian miner went to a store and asked for two pounds of blasting oil. The clerk started to pour it out, and that was the last of the clerk, the miner, and the store. At about the same time, Nobel's nitroglycerin plant in Norway soared skyward. A few weeks later, a railroad worker in Silesia tried to cut frozen blasting oil with an axe. They found his legs half a mile away.

The next April, 70 cases of nitroglycerin blew up aboard a ship docked in Panama. Even the wharf and freight house near by were wrecked, and another ship badly disabled. Sixty people were killed, and the damage came to $1,000,000. Seventy cases of nitroglycerin, marked for San Francisco, had blown up in the *European's* hold.

A few days later a freight wagon, bearing several oil-stained wooden boxes, drew up before the express office in San Francisco. The driver said, "Whoa!" and that was his farewell to life. Fifteen persons were killed, many were injured, and a $200,000 block of buildings was wrecked. The shipment of nitroglycerin was traced to Nobel's New York agents. Other nitroglycerin catastrophes followed.

Alfred Nobel arrived in New York on a business trip a few days after the San Francisco blast, bearing some boxes of "soup." He was about as welcome as the plague. The newspapers had aroused the public, and Fire Marshall Baker was chasing down rumors that parcels of the "murderous compound" were stored in lofts and warehouses. People avoided Nobel, and hotels turned him away. When he announced that he would give a public demonstration at a quarry on 83rd Street, only about twenty men came to see the fireworks, and even they kept their distance. Nobel brought out a flat piece of iron and laid it on a rock. He poured a little of the terrible oil on the iron, and then raised a hammer. The spectators ducked for cover as the hammer descended. There was a sharp report, but Nobel was unharmed. He coaxed them nearer, and in a dry, scientific manner explained that only the oil struck by the hammer exploded. There was the rest of the puddle, undisturbed. You couldn't blow off the lot, he said, without confining it. Then he touched a match to the puddle. It burned, but didn't explode.

For two hours Nobel put the mysterious giant through its paces. He finished the performance with some real blasts, to show what the giant would do when you gave him his head. The crowd went away convinced.

But governments were not convinced, and neither were transportation companies. Although Nobel's office was swamped with orders and a fortune was within his reach, he almost failed that year. Several countries passed laws forbidding the use of Nobel's "soup," and ships refused to carry it. A safe nitroglycerin had to be invented. So Alfred Nobel invented it, though some say it was an accident. In Northern Germany there is a light, absorbent earth called *kieselguhr*. Nobel's workers ran out of sawdust and used it in packing nitroglycerin cans. The story is that one of the cans leaked, and Nobel noticed that the *kieselguhr* drank it up like blotting paper. He mixed three parts of "soup" with one part of *kieselguhr* and his prayers were answered. The stuff could be kneaded like putty and packed in cartridges, it could be exploded with a blasting cap, and it was safe to chip. Nobel called it dynamite. Within a decade, fifteen Nobel plants were turning out six million pounds annually of the new explosive.

At forty, Alfred Nobel found himself a lonely, exhausted, melancholy man, with no interests outside his work, and few acquaintances outside his companies. He had money enough to satisfy any taste, but he couldn't relax, and didn't know how to go about enjoying himself. He didn't even have a home. They called him "the richest vagabond in Europe."

He tried to make himself over. He bought a fine house in Paris, and lived there most of the time. There were few things he could eat because of his stomach trouble, but he installed a good cook, began to entertain, and took great pride in his cellar and his table appointments. He returned to Shelley, the god of his boyhood, and had an idea of writing something worth while. But he was equally at home in six languages, and never could make up his mind which to use. Even in conversation he wandered from one to another, unconsciously slipping into the language which the topic suggested.

He had written great quantities of blank verse in his youth, but late in life he burned the lot, except for the gloomy, introspective, autobiographical poem, a hundred pages long, in which he had traced his life from infancy through his unhappy love affair, concluding in a tone of self-dedication to a life of work. He wrote the poem in English, later translating it into Swedish.

Nobel was a prodigious reader, not only of technical books, but of poetry, philosophy, and, in general, what he called "ideal literature." He sternly disapproved of Zola and the realists, and greatly admired the work of Bjørnson and Selma Lagerlöf (who were both to receive the Nobel prize in literature) and the Swedish poet, Viktor Rydberg, romantic idealist. Many of his letters—he often wrote fifty a day—were exhaustive discussions of new novels, plays, and books

The Nobel Prize Winners for Literature

1901.	René François Armand Sully Prudhomme	1839-1907	French
1902.	Theodor Mommsen	1817-1903	German
1903.	Bjørnstierne Bjørnson	1832-1910	Norwegian
1904.	Frédéric Mistral	1830-1914	French
	Jose Echegaray	1833-1916	Spanish
1905.	Henryk Sienkiewicz	1846-1916	Polish
1906.	Giosuê Carducci	1835-1907	Italian
1907.	Rudyard Kipling	1865-1937	English
1908.	Rudolf Eucken	1846-1926	German
1909.	Selma Lagerlöf	1858-	Swedish
1910.	Paul Heyse	1830-1914	German
1911.	Maurice Maeterlinck	1862-	Belgium
1912.	Gerhart Hauptmann	1862-	German
1913.	Rabindranath Tragore	1861-	Bengalese
1914.	Not awarded		
1915.	Romain Rolland	1866-	French
1916.	Verner von Heidenstam	1859-	Swedish
1917.	Karl Gjellerup	1857-1919	Danish
	Henrik Pontoppidan	1857-	Danish
1918.	Not awarded		
1919.	Carl Spitteler	1845-1925	Swiss
1920.	Knut Hamsun	1859-	Norwegian
1921.	Anatole France	1844-1924	French
1922.	Jacinto Benavente	1866-	Spanish
1923.	William Butler Yeats	1865-1939	Irish
1924.	Vladislav Stanislav Reymont	1868-1925	Polish
1925.	George Bernard Shaw	1856-	English
1926.	Grazia Deledda	1875-1936	Italian (Sard.)
1927.	Henri Bergson	1859-	French
1928.	Sigrid Undset	1882-	Norwegian
1929.	Thomas Mann	1875-	German
1930.	Sinclair Lewis	1885-	American
1931.	Erik Axel Karlfeldt *(posthumous award)*	1864-1931	Swedish
1932.	John Galsworthy	1867-1933	English
1933.	Ivan Bunin	1870-	Russian (exile)
1934.	Liugi Pirandello	1867-1936	Italian
1935.	Not awarded		
1936.	Eugene O'Neill	1888-	American
1937.	Roger Martin du Gard	1881-	French
1938.	Pearl S. Buck	1892-	American

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of verse. He liked those writers who bolstered his belief in the constant progress of humanity. He had a lofty vision of a time when "people would come into the world with better-developed brains." Yet, paradoxically, he scoffed at man's meanness and insignificance, and called himself a "benevolent misanthrope."

For a time Nobel frequented the salon of Madame Juliette Adam, editor of the *Nouvelle Revue,* whose influence on politics and literature was considerable. Authors read from their books there, and actresses recited poems. He also went occasionally to Victor Hugo's house. These meetings spurred him to resume writing, and two unfinished novels resulted. "Brothers and Sisters" dealt skeptically with religion; "In Lightest Africa" was not a travel book, but a vehicle for Nobel's political attitude, which may be described as a kind of socialism modified by distrust of the mass mind. In both attempts, the characters are mere mouthpieces, and there are long, involved dialogues suggestive of the duller passages of Ibsen or Shaw.

He also tried play-writing. Bitter at the loss of a patent suit in England, he wrote a satirical play about it which could interest no one except those involved in the litigation, and he worked for a time at a trivial domestic comedy which he called "A Victim of Imagination." The year of his death, he turned out a four-act tragedy, in which he became completely absorbed. He went to London for a business conference, talked business for five minutes, then brought out his play and read it.

The play was called "Nemesis," and it was based upon the same theme as Shelley's tragedy, "The Cenci." It was full of tedious declamation, and was too close to Shelley for comfort. Nobel's writing friends suggested changes, but he refused to alter a word, saying that he would rather "flutter with his own wings than fly with those of others." The play was about to be published when he died. His executors looked it over and thought it best to burn the edition, saving only three copies for the files. They said that the memory of a great man should not be dimmed by a poor play.

It would have pleased Nobel to make his house a meeting place for intellectuals; and because he wanted to entertain, he considered marriage, but since his early love affair he hadn't met a woman he thought he could get along with. He made cynical remarks about women, for he was desperately shy and believed himself so repulsive that no woman would marry him except for his money. Yet he could be very entertaining, and whenever an attractive woman made a determined attempt to be nice to him, he opened up like a peony.

It was his loneliness, in fact, that led to the establishment of the prizes. In his study there was a secretary's desk, but it was usually vacant. His correspondence was in six languages, and it was not easy to find a good secretary and an accomplished linguist in one person. He knew that he was asking a lot, and got so that he hated to hire secretaries, because he dreaded dismissing them.

In 1876 he tried once more, with this notice: "A very wealthy, cultured, elderly gentleman, desires to find a lady also of mature years, familiar with languages, as secretary and manager of his household." He probably thought it discreet to call himself "elderly." He was only forty-three.

Bertha Kinsky, a Bohemian countess, answered this advertisement. She was an attractive woman of thirty, well educated, charming in manner, and a good listener. Nobel's gloomy, kindly, and occasionally sarcastic manner appealed to her. He, in turn, was much impressed, but before she had actually entered upon her duties, she eloped with young Baron von Suttner.

The young couple worked for the Red Cross during the Russo-Turkish War. The Baroness came back appalled by what she had seen, and wrote a passionate anti-war novel. Soon she was a recognized leader in the peace movement. The Baroness and Alfred Nobel had remained firm friends, and now she appealed to him to help in the movement. He was skeptical, but asked her to send him reading matter and keep him informed. She bombarded him with pamphlets, and they had long debates.

The Baroness had approached Nobel at exactly the right time. With leisure to think, he had made up his mind that many things needed changing. He became opposed to the inheritance of large fortunes. He provided for his mother handsomely, but told the rest of the family not to expect anything when he died.

Nobel was undoubtedly moved by Bertha von Suttner's enthusiasm, although he sometimes poked a little fun at her. What she needed was not money, he told her, but a workable plan. There were too many "gas bags" in the movement, he told her, and some of their schemes were ridiculous. He predicted that his high explosives would put an end to war sooner than her peace meetings, because as military weapons became more deadly, horrified nations would disband their troops.

In spite of his doubts, Nobel made up his mind that he would leave his fortune — which amounted to about nine million dollars at his death—to found a prize for distinguished peace workers. Later he included the prizes for science and literature. It is interesting that he intended these money awards not as crowns for the eminent and successful, but as lifebelts for sinking geniuses, which would save them from financial anxiety while they went on to new achievements. He said that he wished to help dreamers who have a hard time getting a living, and once, when asked to contribute to a Rydberg memorial, he said he preferred "to consider the bellies of the living." Yet the terms of his loosely-drawn will have made it impossible for the award committees to consider the financial status of the recipients.

All this was not exactly what the Baroness had in mind, but her part in bringing it about was widely recognized. When the first Nobel Peace Prize was awarded in 1901, Henri Dunant, co-winner, wrote to thank Bertha von Suttner. The prize was her work, he said. It seems fitting that four years later the peace prize went to the Baroness herself.

Alfred Nobel ended his days in austere solitude in his luxurious villa at San Remo, Italy. He had turned his back on Paris when the French government, alarmed because he had sold his smokeless powder to Italy, placed restrictions upon his work. When his brother Ludwig, who had made a fortune in oil, died, the French papers thought it was Alfred; and he had the peculiar satisfaction of reading his own obituaries. They were not complimentary.

At San Remo he spent most of the time in his laboratory, working on synthetic rubber and artificial silk. His heart began to give out, and he went to specialists. He laughed when they prescribed nitroglycerin. He bought a sphygmograph, watched the line which showed the irregularity of his pulse, and pointed out to friends the degree of variation that would kill him. On December 10, 1896 he died.

Before his death Alfred Nobel abandoned the idea that more powerful killing agents would frighten the nations into peace. He pinned his faith on something very much like the League of Nations. "The only true solution," he wrote, "would be a convention under which all the governments would bind themselves to defend collectively any country that was attacked."

At first, Nobel did not intend to found a perpetual peace prize. He suggested that it be discontinued at the end of thirty years, for he believed that if international peace were not assured by then, the world would relapse into barbarism. He said that in 1893. It was just thirty years later that an Austrian house-painter led a *putsch* in Munich.

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On Disliking Mexico

ANOTHER MEXICO. By Graham Greene. New York: The Viking Press. 1939. 279 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ERNEST GRUENING

THIS volume is appropriately titled. It is an unusual, almost a unique, product in the profuse travel lore about our neighbor. For fifteen years a stream of novelists, journalists, sociologists, professional and amateur, have felt moved by the scenic beauty, the picturesque folkways, the archeological discoveries, and the social reforms, to write glowingly of Mexico. A great tourist industry has developed concomitantly. But here, *mirabile dictu,* is an author who runs counter to the vogue, who does not like Mexico. His vivid portrayal of its less attractive aspects is probably salutary as a corrective for too much adulation, and may be useful to Mexicans who cherish a respect for the opinion of mankind.

Mr. Graham Greene, already noted as a novelist and author of travel books, is a British Catholic in his thirties, who visited Mexico primarily to note how the lives of its people were affected by the destruction of their established worship as a result of the governmental war on the church. His journey took him to see General Saturnino Cedillo in rural San Luis Potosi just before the latter's extinction; to the capital, and to two of the least known and least accessible states, Tabasco and Chiapas. He chose them because they had been dominated by the most savage of anti-clericals, Governor Garrido Cannabal, who actually razed many of the colonial churches, and with his "red shirts" carried on a relentless persecution of Catholics until he himself was driven into exile.

Two characteristics, forthrightness and superb writing, distinguish this account of an adventurous penetration by boat, horse, and mule-back and plane, into the tick- and fever-infested Mexican tropics. The author desires to make clear that he is conditioned to not liking Mexico. He refers to its "evil Aztec soil," to "this hating and hateful country." He tells of the gory cockfight where he thinks he "began to hate the Mexicans." But as a consequence of this antipathy, he gives us some supremely realistic and often valid descriptions—of Mexican food, of Mexican hotel accommodations, of Mexican beggars and other Mexican types, of cacti, of rats, of fleas, flies, and other insects. The following analysis of the embrace or *abrazo* is illustrative:

> I have never been in a country where you are more aware all the time of hate. Friendship there is skin deep—a protective gesture. The motion of greeting you see everywhere upon the street, the hands outstretched to press the other's arms, the semi-embrace—what is it but the motion of pinioning to keep the other man from his gun? There has always been hate, I suppose, in Mexico, but now it is the official teaching: it has superseded love in the school curriculum.

Of course the *abrazo* is not peculiar to Indian Mexico but is unusual in Hispanic countries. Mr. Greene was unconsciously rationalizing his prejudice! Perhaps the most pertinent epitome of his objective and findings is encountered in the following passage:

> Nothing in a tropical town can fill the place of a church for the most mundane use; a church is the one spot of coolness out of the vertical sun, a place to sit, a place where the senses can rest a little while from ugliness; it offers to the poor man what a rich man may get in a theatre—though not in Tabasco. Now in Villanermosa, in the blinding heat and the mosquito-noisy air, there is no escape at all for anyone. Garrido did his job well: he knew that the stones cry out, and he didn't leave any stones. There is a kind of cattle-tick you catch in Chiapas, which fastens its head in the flesh; you have to burn it out, otherwise the head remains embedded and festers. It is an ugly metaphor to use, but an exact one: in northern Chiapas the churches still stand, shuttered and ruined and empty, but they fester—the whole village festers away from the door; the plaza is the first to go.

However, Mr. Greene's work exposes a fundamental paradox. He deplores the hate he finds in Mexico, yet reciprocates it. He must know that no author can do full justice to his subject without sympathy. Yet even one who does not share his distastes cannot but recognize the honest and capable craftsmanship which makes this book a really valuable contribution to the literature on Mexico.

Street scene: the Indians have come down from the mountains into Yajalon bowed double under enormous loads, primitives who speak no Spanish. (Picture and caption from "Another Mexico.")

The Glory That Was Dublin

TUMBLING IN THE HAY. By Oliver St. John Gogarty. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. 1939. 329 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by ERNEST BOYD

WHETHER he is following Saint Patrick or going down Sackville Street, Oliver Gogarty can be depended on for a great deal of good talk, and that is all that matters. This "novel" is a further installment of that Dublin talk, for its narrative makes little effort to tell a story, save that the leading character enters Trinity College as a medical student and has qualified as a doctor when he makes his alcoholic exit in the last chapter. The title is from Shakespeare, rather than the American vernacular, for there is really very little about the hay and those who tumble in it—American style—and that little is in the sardonic Rabelaisianly Dublin tradition, which is *ersatz* puritanism (see Joyce *passim*).

Only a few years ago it was possible to say that Dublin, while the real center of Irish literary activity, did not loom very large in contemporary Anglo-Irish literature. With James Joyce all that changed, and now Dublin, whose acoustic properties were once praised by George Moore, has been the subject of many

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fine sound-recordings. Sean O'Casey, in "Juno and the Paycock" and "The Plough and the Stars," Norah Hoult, in "Coming from the Fair," and Oliver Gogarty, in those early pseudonymous plays of his, as in his three recent books, have been recording every accent and intonation of the town. Dublin has been fortunate in its chroniclers since Moore captured the literati in "Hail and Farewell," and a great nostalgia comes over me as I read them and hear the authentic voice of my birthplace.

Not that the voice is always the same. Each of these writers has an accurate ear for the several varieties of Dublin speech, which combine in a unique way to render the quintessence of the place. Gogarty's Trinity College evening, "Supper with the Gods," is as essentially Dublin as the talk in the pubs and shebeens. Guinness and John Jameson play their important part, but wines are introduced at the right moment and in the appropriate places. Even Davy Byrne's lager beer is not forgotten by Gogarty, and both he and Norah Hoult recognize the Bailey as an institution no less important than Trinity or the Shelbourne Hotel. As a B.A., T.C.D., Gogarty is able to introduce an element of variety from the side of Dublin almost exclusively described by Joyce, though when he foregathers with the medical students of the National University, his world is that of Joyce, pubs and kips, and recondite Catholic witticisms. Protestant Trinity provides him with rich portraiture of types from a vanished era. His delight in Tyrrell and Mahaffey is still unbounded and makes equally delightful reading.

Perhaps this entry of Dublin into contemporary writing is due to the fact that the city so affectionately described exists no more. Always an anachronism, when compared with Belfast or any other (I use the word deliberately) English city, the Dublin of Moore and Joyce and Norah Hoult is as extinct today as Tyre and Sidon. It was an eighteenth-century survival up to the World War. The Easter Insurrection and the subsequent civil war destroyed a lot of it physically and completely extinguished it psychologically and intellectually. For most of us today it is a city of ghosts, of echoes of a wonderful gaiety amidst poverty and rags. The street down which Oliver Gogarty goes in memory now looks like a section of the poorer quarters of Detroit; its shabby magnificence is gone, with the wits and roisterers, artists and sportsmen—talkers all—who made the Dublin of these nostalgic memories. "Tumbling in the Hay" cannot be omitted from the growing list of volumes dedicated to the glory that was Dublin.

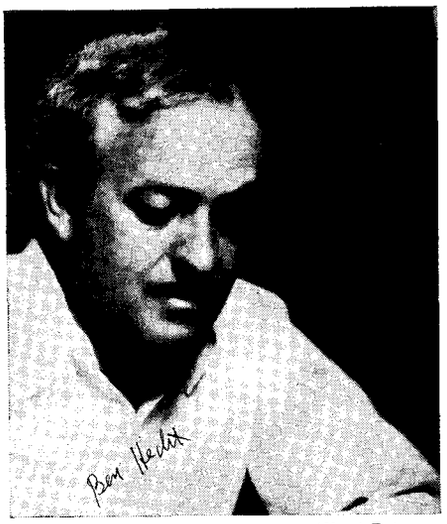
Acts of God

A BOOK OF MIRACLES. By Ben Hecht. New York: The Viking Press. 1939. 465 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

THE scenes in this book range from Hollywood to Heaven, to say nothing of the queen's chamber in a termite colony, but the general tone of its miracles is more Hollywooden than heavenly. Saying that "it is no harder to believe in a miracle that has not happened than in one that has," Mr. Hecht has written seven longish stories of fictitious acts of God; they vary in tone from the comic-satiric to the ironic tragic, but through them all runs the nightmarish vein of fantasy that marks so many books that touch on Hollywood.

Only one of the stories appears to have no moral, that of a professor who is reborn as a termite, for reasons which are never entirely clear;



Albert Petersen

Ben Hecht

this derives its point from elaborate and somewhat heavy-handed comparisons between the insect and the human, but in the end it turns out that a human is not much like a termite after all. The other stories are all concerned, in various ways, with what is wrong with this world. This is partly the heartlessness of capitalism, about which God sometimes does something rather ineffectual; thus Joe Feeney falls into a "fulgurating vat" of molten steel, part of an "inferno of crucible drums" (this is not the miracle, though to any one acquainted with a steel mill it may seem to be); the steelmakers turn him out as a girder, but God sends two angels to watch over that girder till it rusts away, if that is any consolation to Joe Feeney. Another thing that is wrong with the earth is the persecution of Jews, and his grief and fury at this lead Mr. Hecht to write his least flippant, and by all odds his best stories. In a story of a saintly rabbi who, like Job, turned at last and died blaspheming Jehovah and was believed to have perished in the odor of sanctity, and another tale which makes use of the medieval Jewish legend of the *gilgul,* Mr. Hecht achieves stories that are no less tragic for being macabre.

In telling us what is wrong with heaven, on the other hand, Mr. Hecht is more superficial and less successful. Briefly, the trouble with heaven appears to be that all its inhabitants are feeble-minded. There is some evidence for this in the happy platitudes which reach us through professional mediums, and Mr. Hecht makes use of this in one of the stories; but he also presents God as a well-meaning but absent-minded old Gentleman, likely to grow confused in the mazes of His worlds and the meshes of four-dimensional time. Job denounced God as an unjust oppressor; Mr. Hecht patronizes Him. So far, Job is the one God has thought worth answering. When Mr. Hecht is bitter, he can be admirable; but when he tries to be satiric, he can be admired only by readers who have forgotten Anatole France and never read Voltaire.

Heartbreak House

THE WINGS OF THE MORNING. By Edward S. Hyams. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1939. 301 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by RICHARD A. CORDELL

HERE is a very strange novel—baffling, irritating, and intellectually exciting. It is baffling because the reader is never quite sure what it is about, irritating because one suspects that the author himself is uncertain, but intellectually exciting because of the acute and subtle—sometimes passionate and breath-taking—analyses of the problems of modern man. Although "The Wings of the Morning" begins with a suicide and stretches its narrative over a framework of violence and tumult, it is primarily a novel of disquisition, not of mystery and adventure. Its force and pungency result not from the gruesome deaths and the train wreck (which the author seems to introduce almost apologetically) but from the brilliant, though sometimes oracular, conversation, which tackles just about every subject of current intellectual interest. (One feels almost that the book should have an index.)

The novel begins like a conventional thriller: a physician, an undertaker, and a village constable (they do not know that their lives are curiously interrelated) are summoned to a

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house just after the melodramatic suicide of a neurotic artist. A few hours later the widow of the artist is fatally injured in a gory train wreck, but before she dies, from her hospital bed she addresses the physician, the undertaker, and the constable on the parlous state of the world of 1939 and announces that she is bequeathing the three of them £28,000 so that they may do something about it. In analyzing her maladajusted husband and the warring forces that shattered and destroyed him, she asserts that what happened to a man is happening to a world; the beastliness is spreading, and the worship of violence is a fire that will not be extinguished until it has consumed the whole world.

The novel slips into a Wellsian fantasy when the three men found an Order, not based on Rationalism—which the dying woman scorns as a "system called into being to explain the profound rightness of our overlaid and nearly exterminated instincts, which are thus rediscovered as intellectual excellencies"—but on the determination to preserve those amenities which the liberal has always striven for—freedom, arbitration, the practice of kindliness, generosity, and the humanities, non-violence, progress toward a more evolved but less complex state of civilization. But men are human individuals first and only secondly members of an ideal social group (whether in New Harmony or Moscow); and human frailty together with the savage momentum of opposing forces makes success more than doubtful at the end of this provocative book. The author has little interest in his characters, who serve, like many of Bernard Shaw's, only as mouthpieces. The book is strangely like a novelization of the Preface to "Heartbreak House," in which Shaw analyzes brilliantly the world of 1915; twenty-four years later the time is so much more out of joint that the efforts of the ineffectual "Order" to set it right barely escape being ludicrous.

"The Wings of the Morning," the first novel of a young London printer and aviator, Edward Hyams, has already attracted considerable attention in England and should find an equally fit audience, and not too few, in America.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 272)

REPPLIER:
"CHARM OF THE FAMILIAR"

"Unrest . . . is the mark of existence." It almost seems as if two-thirds of mankind were hard at work improving away the happiness of the remaining third, and bidding them at intervals to stop grumbling and appreciate the change.

Tellers of Tales

(*Continued from page 4*)

on magazines, to present their productions to the public.

To write a story in accordance with the principles laid down by Edgar Allan Poe is not so easy as some think. It requires intelligence, not perhaps of a very high order, but of a special kind; it requires a sense of form and no small power of invention. But it is plain that this manner of story no longer carries conviction. The modern story fulfills a spiritual need in the modern reader that the old story cannot satisfy. The technique and the outlook of the writers of today differ a good deal from those of the masters of the nineteenth century; but before I go into this I must mention a circumstance that has forced itself upon my attention and that has caused me a certain perplexity; this is that so many of these stories might have been written by the same hand. It looks as though there were something in the method of the modern short story that submerges the personality of the author. The stories of Henry James, of Maupassant, and of Chekhov could only have been written by themselves. You may not like the personality of these authors, but there it is, manifest to the grossest sense, in their every page. For my part I have always thought that just this, the personality of the creator, was what gave a work of art its lasting interest; it does not matter if it is a slightly absurd one, as with Henry James, a somewhat vulgar one, as with Maupassant, or a grey, melancholic one, as with Chekhov: so long as he can present it, distinct and idiosyncratic, his work has life. The short-story writers of our time seem to lack this curious power. Violent though they often are, hard, ruthless, and devoid of sentimentality, they seldom manage to impress t h e i r special individuality upon their work. They are communal writers. They remind one of the decorative painters in the eighteenth century who painted flower pieces to put over doors or let into panels above the chimneypiece; it is a pleasant art, but its merit owes more to a period than to a personal gift.

When Chekhov's stories come off they give you a sense of reality which Maupassant's, even at their best, hardly do, for the pattern he has forced upon them prevents your complete surrender; somewhere in your subconscious the recollection lingers that what you are reading is after all only a fiction. And in the best of the modern short stories you do get a feeling of real life that I think has not often before been so closely attained; this, you say, is how things do happen, I believe in these people, I know the look of the streets they walk in and I recognize the smell of their houses. But in fiction, as in life, you can seldom get one thing except at the cost of another; and I have a notion that these writers, in order to get the particular effect they do, have had to sacrifice what is often thought the greatest resource of the storyteller, the eagerness he excites in you to know how things will turn out. They often interest, they may even give you cause for reflection, but they do not thrill; your blood runs no faster as you read and you do not feverishly turn the pages to discover what will happen next. Modern writers lay little emphasis on plot, and for this reason are at their best when they are brief, for as soon as stories lengthen they need the support that a plot gives them in order to maintain coherence. They omit a good deal which at the beginning of his narrative the writer, in order to explain the circumstances, was accustomed to tell. They are apt at the end to leave things in the air so that the reader must answer for himself any questions he has to ask. They fight shy of the dramatic and the unexpected. Chekhov in one of his letters, defending his own practice, says that people do not go to the North Pole and fall off icebergs; they go to offices, quarrel with their wives, and eat cabbage soup. Of course it is untrue that people do not do adventurous things, but even if it were true, it would be no argument against writing stories about people who did. Man has always been excited by the marvelous and has listened with pleasure to tales of it. After all, one of the best and most moving stories in the world is the story in the Book of Genesis of Joseph and his Brethren.

The writers of the present time, unless I am mistaken, are more interested in social circumstances, in the injustice of modern conditions, in the relation of persons to their environment, in short, than in their relations to one another. The result of this is that they are likely to suffer from a certain shortage of material. If you know all about a sawmill, for instance, if you have yourself worked in one, you can probably write a very good story about it, even two or three; but you cannot go on writing stories about sawmills indefinitely; presently you will have said all you can on the subject, and then you are obliged to look for some other environment. You are lucky if you can find one about which you can learn to write with first-hand knowledge. It is a grave handicap that these specialist writers, of which there are so many nowadays, labor under; they exhaust their subjects, and, as we know, either go on writing the same old story to the

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weariness of their readers, or lapse into silence. The only subject that is inexhaustible is man. You can go on writing all your life and touch no more than the fringe of it. The difficulty of the writer who eschews a plot—and a plot, I should add, is no more than the pattern that is imposed upon the conduct of the various persons with whom you are dealing—in favor of a narration of the circumstances offered by a certain environment is that, getting nearer and nearer to life as we know it is lived, avoiding surprise, thrill, unexpected yet logical accident, which are the essential characteristics of the formal story, he has nothing to offer the reader that the narrator of actual facts cannot give him with greater force. He has ceased to be a writer of fiction; he has become a reporter. It is the death of the short story if it can be beaten at its own game by the naked truth. If the short story is to be a work of art it must be more than that.

Modern writers are mostly moved by pity and anger; indeed pity is the fashionable literary emotion of our day. It is that for which a novelist is most praised. Critics have even found it in Chekhov, though the readers of his own time often complained that his objectivity was such that you could not tell from his stories where his sympathies lay. Now everyone knows that the world is in a bad way, liberty is dead or dying, poverty, relentless exploitation of labor, cruelty, injustice are everywhere. There is good cause for anger and pity; but they are unprofitable emotions unless they lead you to some effort. They are despicable when, satisfied that you have the generosity to feel them, you will not get busy to change the conditions that have aroused them. In our small contemporary world of writers and readers pity is too often a balm we apply to our wounded souls in order that we may spare ourselves the inconvenience of action. The writer's business is not to pity, nor to rage, but to understand.

The writer of fiction is concerned with the particular rather than with the general. He chooses his instances. He directs your interest to suit his purpose. By emphasis, by throwing a high light here or leaving in shadow there, he inevitably falsifies; and, however honest he would be, his very nature forces him to load the dice. If the novelist is an acute observer, he can sometimes provide material that the scientist can make use of; but at best he is only the field naturalist, whose merit is accuracy and receptiveness, and who, if he is wise, leaves theoretical conclusions to the specialist. It would be all to the good if the novelist were a scientist and a philosopher, for the more he knows the richer his books will be, but even though he were, when he wrote he would cease to be either; he would be an artist. The artist's truth is a different truth from the philosopher's and the scientist's; for truth, we all know now, is not one and indivisible, truth is relative to needs. Their aim is knowledge, but his is liberation. The artist has a natural facility for creation, and to exercise his gifts is a delight to him; he creates in order to disembarrass his soul of a burden that oppressed it and thus gain release. But this is no concern of the layman who reads his poems or looks at his pictures: to the layman art offers solace and relaxation and an escape from the reality of life; and sometimes it enlarges his soul, presents new ideas to his spirit, and heartens him to cope with the difficult business of living. If it can do this, its power is so great that the artist need not disparage himself because he cannot provide the knowledge that is found in textbooks. But only the greatest art has such power. It is when the artist thus moves you that you are justified in ascribing genius to him. Genius is rare. No artist need be ashamed if he can do no more than offer entertainment.

There is a certain amount of fiction that it becomes every well-bred man to have read; it belongs to the culture of the world, and so far as culture is a part of knowledge it must be regarded as essential to everyone's education. But there is not much of it. I think a bookcase that held twenty books would be large enough to contain all the works of fiction that it would leave a man spiritually poorer not to have read. This bookcase would contain "Don Quixote," "Wihelm Meister," "Pride and Prejudice," "Le Rouge et le Noir," "Le Père Goriot," "Madame Bovary," "War and Peace," "David Copperfield," "The Brothers Karamazov" and "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu;" but I am not sure that it would contain any short stories. For the short story is a minor art, and it must content itself with moving, exciting, and amusing the reader. It is wise then to read short stories for the entertainment they provide. It is unreasonable to ask of them more than they can give you. But it would be foolish to despise them on that account. Let no one think that entertainment is a cheap and shoddy thing; entertainment is a form of pleasure and pleasure is in itself good. There is no need for pleasure to be unintelligent. One of the signs of culture is that you are able to extract pleasure from objects or events to which the ignorant are indifferent.

The foregoing article, somewhat expanded, will constitute the introduction to "Tellers of Tales," an anthology of short stories edited by W. Somerset Maugham, published next week.

Not Cut to Pattern

POST STORIES OF 1938: *A COLLECTION OF* 22 *STORIES. Boston: Little, Brown & Co.* 1939. 424 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by JOSEPH HILTON SMYTH

IT has long been a custom of various small but definitely "literary" groups to use the term "a typical *Saturday Evening Post* story" as a synonym for some derogatory phrase. *Post* stories, according to these larval literati, are strictly "formula" stories, devoid of inspiration, originality, and artistic honesty.

Again, another, more radical, group insists that *Post* stories are by way of being a sort of Sunday School picnic held for the nefarious purposes of "Big Business." Industry and love go hand in hand, and only the hard- and long-working, faithful above all else to the unwritten rules of Business, deserve the fair. All this, the gentlemen of the Left proclaim, is subtle propaganda, serving the same insidious purpose that religion once served in Russia.

The present selection of *Post* stories, taken from those published in 1938, does much to refute both accusations. Certainly the stories follow no set formula or pattern; there is, for example, no similarity between Stephen Vincent Benét's "Doc Mellborn and the Pearly Gates," and Leland Jamieson's "Traffic Trick." The latter story, incidentally, is the only one that might be said to follow the *Post* pattern, for in it a man's work is held to be of paramount importance. In "The Yogi of West Ninth Street," one of Guy Gilpatric's Glencannon tales, there is nothing to exalt Big Business, for Mr. Gilpatric's *Post* characters have a way of being definitely un-moral, both in affairs of the heart and matters of finance. To continue: Patterson McNutt's bitter sketch of Hollywood is sharper and more biting than many a similar piece in *The New Yorker;* Martin Storm's study of a mother-in-law could easily find a place in one of the more "literary" publications; MacKinlay Kantor's "Valedictory" is already accepted as outstanding among last year's output.

True enough, none of the selections in the present volume could be safely termed a literary masterpiece, but there are precious few literary masterpieces turned out anywhere today. What can be remarked, however, is the high degree of competent craftsmanship displayed in the stories, a craftsmanship too often neglected by the young writer in revolt.

Erratum

The photograph of President Neilson on page 5 of our issue of June 10 should have been credited to Snively.

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Denunciation Is Not Enough

REVOLUTIONS AND DICTATORSHIPS. By Hans Kohn. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. 1939. 437 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by VERA MICHELES DEAN

TO determine the direction in which we are being carried by the tide of events is the most difficult task the historian can undertake. Yet this task must be performed if we are to see in contemporary history something more than a stream of consciousness.

Few writers in the United States can bring to such a job the erudition, the first-hand knowledge of European and Near Eastern nationalism, the grasp of forces underlying the history of our times which Dr. Kohn has at his command. In this collection of essays he gives an excellent bird's-eye view of the nineteenth century landscape which serves as background for the ideologies and power politics of today. It would be difficult to disagree with his analysis of the past hundred years, in which nationalism and liberalism—essentially contradictory in character—have been spreading from the Western world into Central and Eastern Europe, and thence to Asia, Africa, and Latin America, creating conflicts within and between states on a scale surpassing the post-Napoleonic period.

Innumerable questions, however, are raised by his invariably stimulating discussion of the new forms taken by nationalism after the World War. He points out, for example, that National Socialism stems from pre-war Prussianism and the peculiar form of romanticism which we have come to associate with the German people. He also recognizes that the Fascist dictatorships, although the antithesis of Western concepts of liberty and equality, "carry further three of the most important elements of the French revolution—its secularism, its nationalism, and its mass democracy."

Yet having placed Nazism in the stream of European, as well as German, history, he then deals with it as if it were an entirely alien phenomenon, with no roots in the past of Germany or Europe. Why did Nazism come in Germany, and not in France or Britain? Was it solely because the Germans are different from other European peoples, lacking their sense of proportion and their moral values? Or is it because the Germans had remained outside the main currents of the French and Anglo-Saxon revolutions, and are now passing through a phase which the Western peoples have left far behind? Or, again, is it owing to the fact that, so far as Germany was concerned, democracy and capitalism, socialism and communism—all offshoots of the French Revolution—had proved equally ineffective and disillusioning during the post-war period, creating a moral and intellectual vacuum which Nazism was prompt to fill? Can war alone crush the concepts of Nazism—after having failed, twenty years ago, to crush Prussianism; or must the German people, through its own bitter travail, develop a new attitude toward liberty and equality before it can live at peace with the rest of Europe? Denunciation of Nazism does not provide a satisfactory answer to these questions.

It is even more difficult, for this reviewer, to agree with the conclusions which Dr. Kohn draws from his analysis in the final essay on "The Totalitarian Crisis." He appears to assume that the democracies, whatever their shortcomings, have created moral values at home and abroad which must be defended at all costs against the disintegrating doctrines of fascism; and denounces those who may question this assumption as incipient fascists. His premise is indubitably true in the sphere of domestic affairs. Is it true in the international sphere? The young generation in democratic countries, which has continually lived amid war and rumor of war, can hardly be expected to have many illusions about international morality. Has the imperialism of France, Britain, and the United States, only yesterday denounced by older liberals as "immoral," suddenly become moral now that it is threatened by the fascist dictatorships? Are we opposing the Nazis because we find their *Weltanschauung* repugnant, or because their activities threaten our strategic and economic interests?

Such questions are raised not in an effort to destroy the moral values of Western civilization, as Dr. Kohn would indicate, but to discover whether our attitude toward the fascist dictatorships is determined by moral considerations or by considerations of self-interest. Moral values do not precede the establishment of a social order: they are its by-products. If the democratic powers had really created a new international order in 1919, the argument from morality would be incontrovertible today. But, as Dr. Kohn himself points out, France, Britain, and the United States each in its own way betrayed the democratic ideals of the League of Nations—and it can hardly be argued that their policies toward Germany, Italy, or Japan during the past twenty years were governed solely by moral precepts. The democracies have the soundest of reasons for opposing the expansion of the fascist dictatorships, which threaten their possessions and institutions. But if they are to succeed in this struggle, they will have to do more than denounce or fight fascism. They will have to bring to fruition the theories of the nineteenth century now challenged by Hitler and Mussolini—and demonstrate, in practice, that they can use democratic methods not only at home, but also on the international plane.

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PURSLANE
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THIS simple, warm-hearted story of the Fullers and their many "kinfolks" in North Carolina is filled with the rich beauty and the humor of real country living. As Miss Canfield says, "to younger Americans the picture of only a generation ago will have all the fragrant charm of an unknown past." *Purslane* is the "surprise" novel of the season.

The University of North Carolina Press—Chapel Hill, N. C.

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Poet's Self-Portrait

MILTON ON HIMSELF. By John S. Diekhoff. New York: Oxford University Press. 1939. 307 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

Reviewed by MILTON L. ZISOWITZ

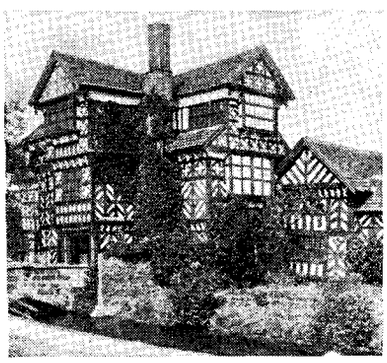
NOT the least important result of the recent completion of the monumental Columbia Milton will be the impetus it gives to seventeenth-century scholarship generally and to Miltonic scholarship particularly. John S. Diekhoff's "Milton on Himself" is one of the first of what will probably be a long series of works descended from the great piece of scholarship produced by the General Editor of the Columbia Milton, Professor Frank A. Patterson, and by his associates.

Confronted, as we have been, by so many conflicting estimates of John Milton, it is important to see what the poet had to say about himself. In the past, those who were interested in reading the many autobiographical passages which appear both in Milton's poetry and in his prose had no alternative but to do their own searching. Now, Dr. Diekhoff has done this extremely important task for us. And we have, for the first time, everything that John Milton said about himself conveniently collected into one volume.

Why has Milton, perhaps more than any other figure in English literary history, been the subject of so much controversy—controversy not over mere scholarly and academic minutiæ, but acrimonious debates by such contemporary literary figures as Hilaire Belloc and Rose Macaulay? Milton has kindled the fire in so many pens because he was not only a great poet, but a great philosopher and a great man. We do not care so much about the personal history of the man. It is the history of his thoughts that interests us. Only in comparatively recent years have we begun to realize that Milton was not only one of England's greatest poets, but one of her greatest philosophers and one of her greatest men of action. He is as great a figure in the history of the rise of democracy in England as he is in the history of English literature. We have only to read the excerpts from the "Reason of Church Government" and from the great "Second Defence" which Dr. Diekhoff publishes to realize that Milton's greatest concern in life was liberty—personal liberty, religious liberty, political liberty, and liberty of thought and action. And in his lifelong fight for liberty, John Milton displayed rare energy and rarer courage. Readers of his great pamphlet on the freedom of the press, "Areopagitica," sometimes forget that it was written in defiance of a censorship imposed by the very government in which Milton himself was to hold an important post. We forget, sometimes, that it required heroic courage to stand before the world as the justifier of the regicides.

All of John Milton's work, poetry as well as prose, is packed with dynamite—dynamite calculated to destroy all opponents of man's freedom. And this dynamite, because it is compounded of truths which are just as valid today as they were in the seventeenth century, is as dangerous to twentieth-century opponents of freedom as it was to the tyrants of Milton's time. That is why biographers, too frequently, have been unable to discuss this great man dispassionately.

We have heard about Milton from men ranging in scholarly stature from Tillyard and Grierson to Saurat and Belloc. It is time that we have had the opportunity to hear about Milton from the greatest authority of all, John Milton. Diekhoff has done a great service to those who are interested in Milton and in English thought and history. In assembling Milton's autobiographical passages, he has wisely relegated himself to the background. His excellent introduction and notes make no effort to interpret Milton's writings for us. They serve merely to give us the necessary tools for a clear understanding of Milton's interpretation of himself.



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Ludwig Lewisohn's Case for Zionism

THE ANSWER. The Jew and the World: Past, Present and Future. By Ludwig Lewisohn. New York: Liveright. 1939. 342 *pp.* $2.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

OF those who read this book a few will believe; more will scoff or dispute; and many will pause in bewilderment. Mr. Lewisohn's message, stated with rather tiresome repetition in what is apparently a collection of essays and speeches, is predominantly a message to American Jews. It is an appeal to the group consciousness of the American Jewish community. Written by a distinguished man of letters who does not hesitate to call himself a Jewish propagandist and a professional Jew, it calls upon Jews to abandon the "servile assimilationism" hitherto in fashion among them. Jews are to assert and nurture their existence as a separate people and a separate church, and are to be accorded equivalent rights with other national and religious groups in a liberal America where true tolerance—or cultural and political pluralism—prevails.

But this is not all. Jewish values and Jewish moral precepts inherited from millennia of their national history demand that Jews espouse true liberalism and eschew the degradation of communism as a way of life or a solution of the Jewish problem. Absorption into the human milieu, Mr. Lewisohn feels, would constitute sheer negation for Jewry, even if the German experience had not proved it to be impossible. The destiny of his people is not assimilation but a continuing, well-defined existence in which the uniquely beneficent elements of Jewish life may reach fullest fruition. This can be realized only by creation of a Zionist Palestine, where the persecuted nationality may repossess its ancient territory, transporting the duly compensated Arabs to other Arab lands and forming a political and spiritual nucleus for additional territorial settlements of those Jews who cannot be squeezed into the Land of Israel.

To state Mr. Lewisohn's underlying thesis in this bald fashion is by no means to do it full justice. His credo is intensely personal; it is a mystical invocation of a Jewish group-soul or culture-complex which by his own admission defies precise definition. For some Jews the creation of a Jewish national ideology will provide an intellectual spar to which they may cling as they feel themselves submerged under waves of anti-semitism. For the more tough-minded among them, however, Mr. Lewisohn's doctrine will resemble nothing so much as hyperbole or escapism. These individuals may well deny that the Jews are a nationality in the accepted sense of the word: they have today no common language, territorial base, or eth-

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nic origin. They may question the assertion that the Jews are "morally unique" or the peculiar bearers of certain civilizing values. They may not understand why the essentially nationalist claim of the Zionists to Palestine is any more valid than the nationalist claim of the Arabs. And, together with non-Jews, they will inevitably be troubled by the difficulty of reconciling Mr. Lewisohn's concept of Jewish nationality with the demands of the nation in which they live. The crux of the matter is probably this: that a Jew either falls in with Mr. Lewisohn's Jewish *Weltanschauung* by virtue of blind faith, or he rejects it on some rationalistic basis. Mr. Lewisohn has been honest enough to admit that the very great majority of American Jews are in the latter class.

David H. Popper is the author of "The Puzzle of Palestine."

Letters to the Editor

(*Continued from page* 9)

time to social studies, are virtually unknown. Farnam's magnum opus is "Chapters on History of Social Legislation in the United States to 1860." It probably is good social science, but it does not move the pulse.

The sociologist, like his brother social scientist, is likely to fall prey to the natural temptation of taking sides. For the issues in the social sciences that are significant are also those that are pressing. The objectives are human welfare; judgment is significant only forward, not backward; that which threatens human welfare is false; that which advances it is truth. The defense of truth seems in the nature of the case somewhat different from that which applies to the physical sciences. Socialism, for example, is analysis with a purpose; capitalism is a description with intent; the economic concepts in both depend upon values that are not scientific but functions of the will. The way of the social scientist passes between Scylla and Charybdis.

It so happens that I still agree with Mr. Brinton that the combination of partisanship with scientific dispassionateness is out of place. I think Professor Farnam was a beautiful example of the ideal combination, with his scientific inquiries up to 1860 and his practical philanthropies practised daily in his personal life. But Farnam is much less important than Marx, or Hitler, and his contributions to scientific sociology are inferior to those of Marx and Hitler. I think the social scientist is a doomed man. If he is scientifically truthful, he is sterile and insignificant; if he is a realist and defines truth as human welfare, he is a partisan. Maybe what's the matter with the sociologist is, that in his many guises from pot-boiler instructor to best-seller professor, he must be Aristotle and Moses at the same time.

PHILIP KLEIN.
New York School of Social Work,
New York City.

Nine Scriptures

THE BIBLE OF MANKIND. Compiled and edited by Mirza Ahmad Sohrab. New York: Universal Publishing Co. 1939. 743 *pp., with index.* $5.

Reviewed by ERNEST SUTHERLAND BATES

A SINGLE volume containing generally well-chosen and well-edited selections of from fifty to one hundred pages each from the leading scriptures of nine great religions is truly a treasure. The religions here brought together for comparative study are Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, and Buddhism; Confucianism, Taoism, Judaism; Christianity, Islam, and Bahaism. Each group of selections opens with a brief introduction by a competent expositor of the particular faith involved, and the whole book has an interesting preface by the general editor, Mr. Sohrab, who is also the author of the special study of Bahaism. A work planned and executed in so catholic a spirit fully deserves its ambitious title.

It is eminently fitting that a volume which aims to present the best of every religion should be brought out under Bahaist auspices, since the central tenet of the new Persian faith (relatively new, though now almost a century old) is that there is a common core of spiritual truth, of what John Dewey has finely called a "loyalty to ideal ends," in all of the great world religions. "The Bible of Mankind" is a convincing demonstration of this Bahaist creed. An adherent of any one of the religions involved is likely to be surprised at the number of beliefs, fondly supposed peculiar to his own faith, that he will find equally well expressed in each of the others. Devotees of the strictly contemporary may also find food for thought in the intensely living quality of most of this volume.

Naturally, as in any collection, the parts of the book are of unequal value. The editors of the Old and New Testament hardly do complete justice to their material, and are somewhat less scholarly in their presentation than the others. Chronology is disregarded: selections from the spiritually disparate "Mosaic" books, Prophets, and Proverbs are grouped indiscriminately together; the Gospel of John appears in the company of the Synoptics, and the Epistles of Paul are interwoven with both, quite in the manner of old-fashioned "harmonies of the Scriptures." The Oriental editors, on the other hand, are careful to emphasize such distinctions of time and authorship. Their aim has clearly been to present a unity in diversity, whereas the western editors seem wedded to an ideal of unity overriding diversity—an entirely different matter.

Ernest Sutherland Bates edited "The Bible: Designed to Be Read as Living Literature."

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The New Books

Fiction

NEXT TO VALOUR. By John Jennings. Macmillan. 1939. 820 *pp.* $2.75.

This is a pedestrian historical novel in the Kenneth Roberts manner but lacking, unfortunately, Roberts's gifts of characterization and vivid narrative. The material is exciting enough, dealing, as it does, with the early exploits of Rogers' Rangers during the French and Indian War, and ending with Wolfe's triumph on the Plains of Abraham. But the thread of narrative on which the material is strung is thin and conventional, and even Rogers fails to come alive. The hero, Jamie Ferguson, flees to New Hampshire from Scotland with his mother and sisters, after the disaster of '45. In the new land, he learns frontier ways, falls unsuitably in love with the beautiful but frail Dorcas Drew, and insists upon marrying her. The marriage turns out a bad bargain, Dorcas deceives him with his cousin Hubert and everybody suffers, in the intervals between campaigns. But it all comes right in the end, thanks to Purity Stiles, the virtuous but woodsy, who has been under Jamie's eye all the time but whom he hasn't really noticed, being a man. Meanwhile, we have the campaigns around Lake Champlain, the attack on Ticonderoga and the fall of Quebec. Mr. Jennings's research may be, for all we know, impeccable. But his novel, as a novel, is dull and long-winded.

S. V. B.

BORN OF THE STORM. By Nicholas Ostrovsky. Critics Group Press. 1939. 252 *pp.* $1.50.

Although Nicholas Ostrovsky did not live to complete his second book, it is clear enough from what we have that he had told his whole story. It is one that is having its latest repercussions today. In 1918 the Germans were about to surrender their occupation of Polish Ukraine, and at the same time the Bolshevik movement was sweeping forward from Russia, to take hold wherever it could. The Polish nobles hated both equally and engaged in a network of political and military maneuvers to keep the Ukraine, which was slipping out of German hands, from turning Bolshevik. The result was a confused dogfight, with any two of the parties combining at any moment to destroy the third, turning then upon each other. To Ostrovsky, the communist, it is a storm out of which the Ukranian people are to be reborn, free. That is his story and we can see him moving toward it even though the book ends still in the uncertainty of confusion. One must grant him the steady excitement of battle-scenes, court intrigues, hand-to-hand encounters, factory barricades, and the like, even while one regrets his simple classification of characters, Good and Bad. You can always tell whom to hiss—those brutish, low-browed Germans and Polish nobles,—and whom to cheer—those brave and noble communists. Are people always transformed entirely by the fact that they are on the right or the wrong side?

N. L. R.

History

RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION TIMES. By Dorothy Mills. Putnams. 1939. 345 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

This brief textbook seems to be meant for children of junior high school age, who should be attracted by its simple prose and its many illustrations, and who may be tempted by its frequent quotations of sixteenth century sources into more mature reading. Children, however, have the same right as the rest of us to accuracy; if they are asked to memorize dates, the dates should be correct; if they are offered explanations, the explanations should not have been discarded long ago by adult historians. And children have a special right to a clear and significant selection and arrangement of the facts they study. On these counts this book does not seem very suitable for its public.

G. M.

A LANDMARK HISTORY OF NEW YORK. By Albert Ulmann. Appleton-Century. 1939. 440 *pp., with index.* $3.50.

A curious book, interesting and sprightly, but not specially useful for either the purpose set forth in title or sub-title. The latter is "A Guide to Commemorative Sites and Monuments," the guide being arranged in "excursions" not too much either for the visitor's legs or his powers of assimilation, and beautifully cross-indexed. But

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Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
MURDER RECALLS VAN KILL *Spencer Bayne* (Harpers: $2.)	Savant-sleuth, temporarily tutoring prodigy-son of N. Y. college prof., encounters brutal murder and theft of radium.	Designed for those who can take their erudition neat, language neater, and realism neatest. And the *Wunderkind* is priceless.	High voltage
TRAGEDY IN E FLAT *Leonard R. Gribble* (Hillman-Curl: $2.)	London night-club actress stabbed and ex-doorman chucked into pond. Insp. Anthony Slade and Sgt. Clinton handle case.	Meticulously wrought affair, in best British manner, with numerous leads, clever murder device, and reverse-English ending.	Safe and sane
SO MUCH BLOOD *Bruno Fischer* (Greystone Press: $2.)	Greenwich Village apt. house full of assorted artists scene of two sanguinary slayings. Poet-sleuth (amateur) outguesses the cops.	Scurvy lot of characters, including some very rough police and several tempestuous ladies. Solution clicks—but so what?	Lush and lurid

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it would break a camel's back to carry the book around, as it is printed on one of those expensive art papers which benefit the cuts more than the customers. The landmark history occupies the first half of the volume. It starts with the Indians before Hudson and is more a description of life and manners than history in the usual sense of the term, but excellent of its kind. Each chapter closes with a list of the monuments or tablets commemorating the period mentioned in the text; and the whole ends with Morse's invention of the telegraph as though that were the ultimate point in the city's development. Is there no iconography of the Draft Riots, one wonders? And has Mr. Ulmann never visited the Atlantic Basin docks, where signs advertising clipper-ship sailings for The River Plate and South Africa still preside over odors of mingled coffee and spice?

F. P.

MARCY AND THE GOLD SEEKERS, the Journal of Captain J. B. Marcy, with an Account of the Gold Rush over the Southern Route. By Grant Foreman. University of Oklahoma Press. 1939. $3.

In his latest work Dr. Foreman weaves lively, colorful source material together with his own contributions into a coherent account of an adventurous, rough, juicy period when the semi-insanity of the gold rush was poured into the already adequately strong pattern of the expanding frontier. Source material, raw journals, and contemporary notices out of which history is built, can be made or ruined by its selection or handling; here the treatment heightens the inherent values, and makes for easy reading as well as information.

Without much fanfare, the University of Oklahoma Press is putting forth a library of historical literature (not merely history) covering the development of Oklahoma and the Southwest generally, Indians, Spaniards, Mexicans, North Americans. The books range from primarily "popular" treatments which have actually been popular, to technical works which still maintain a high literary standard. The whole body of these publications, to which Dr. Foreman's contribution is outstanding, is building a wide presentation of the long, varied past of the newest part of the United States.

O. LaF.

Miscellaneous

SAN FRANCISCO: WEST COAST METROPOLIS. Photographs and Text by Edwin Rosskam. Introduction by William Saroyan. Alliance Book Corporation. 1939. 136 *pp.* $2.50.

Introduced as the first volume of a projected series of text-and-picture books which will "interpret" American cities, this does not pretend to be a guide-book in any sense. Its author presents it simply as his story of one of America's "vital cities, its functioning and its people."

Mr. Rosskam has done a fairly creditable job of what he set out to do. It is true, of course, that no picture-book could possibly contain all the phases of any city's life. It is also true that dozens, perhaps hundreds, of readers will be able to think of pictures Mr. Rosskam has missed. The point, however, is that he has got in a remarkably large proportion of significant ones—pictures that really show what much of San Francisco is like. His foreign-colony shots are especially good, as are those he has chosen to represent the waterfront. It does seem a little odd that while he goes well afield to show both gold and lettuce, which drain into and through San Francisco, he ignores the great universities with which the city is practically surrounded; but perhaps this is not so important as some of the material he has included. After all, the book does suggest the city, the "beautiful and ugly heaven," as Mr. Saroyan says in his most violent manner, "that is San Francisco." And while both extremes of civic consciousness—left and right wings together—will complain bitterly that this is not the city they know, Mr. Rosskam may be sure that the great middle group will find no severer criticism than perhaps a plaintive hint that he should not have left out the Stevenson Monument and put in Coit Tower.

J. H. J.

Travel

CEYLON. By Lord Holden. Macmillan. 1939. 315 *pp., with index.* $3.

Ceylon, one of the world's great islands, and one of Buddhism's earliest homes, has become fairly well known to travelers since round-the-world cruises began to make Colombo a port of call. Lord Holden, who knows from experience practically every inch of the length and breadth of the island, has written a book that should be of great interest to every visitor, for it offers in brief form not only a guide but a history.

The noble Lord is no great shakes as writer, his style being something of a cross between the ponderousness of a letter to the *Times* and the facetiousness of an after-dinner speaker. He nevertheless manages to make a readable book about Ceylon, its cities, its countryside, its people, and its monuments—not least among which is the celebrated Temple of the Tooth, where may now be found a tooth which, if it ever graced the mouth of Gautama, must have caused him something more than ordinary pain. It is almost large enough for a tiger. The story is that the Portuguese burned the real tooth, which was genuine, and when the church replaced it, to satisfy the multitudes, they decided to do the job up brown and provide a tooth which could really be seen.

There is an interesting chapter on facilities for travelers which, although it presents government rest houses in

(*Continued on next page*)

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The New Books

(*Continued from preceding page*)

an appalling light, made this reader, at least, anxious to visit one. Much of the book is devoted to these pertinent facts in the history of Buddhism which have a bearing on Ceylon. In this section the author gives a glimpse of the ancient kings of Ceylon, who certainly seem to have been a colorful and bizarre lot. Lord Holden's book provides a valuable introduction to what for most travelers will be a thoroughly fascinating, if somewhat baffling field.

R. H.

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COLLEGE WOMAN, fond of country and quiet, owns car—lacks country home. Would consider reciprocal arrangement. Box 307-D.

LADY-companion for children for summer. Tutor, drive, speak French. References. HU. 2-1807. 6 P. M.

ATTRACTIVE, intelligent secretary, M.A., sense of humor, wishes summer in country. Can keep quiet. Likes roughing it. Drives. What writer or professor needs her services? Box 309-D.

FOOTHILLS GREEN MOUNTAINS—Unusually good meals, good beds, friendly atmosphere; all the seclusion one desires but near attractive town. Beautiful drives (car and driver at your service). Box 310-D.

MAMARONECK. 5 rooms, 2 family, Christian adults seeking quiet home. Heat, hot water, garden, attractive neighborhood, near station. $55. References. Box 311-D.

SUBLET by month or season. 140 E. 56 St. Country quiet in center of urbanity. Airy, spacious apartment suitable for couple or trio. Box 312-D.

BREEZY four room apartment, summer-rental, quiet, homelike, reasonable, 145 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York. Box 313-D.

BOX 68-C: Please communicate. We are holding mail for you. Personals Dept., S. R. L.

FURNISHED: Bedroom, living-room, kitchen—fully equipped for two—piano, attractive—cross ventilation—Leon—5C—55 West 55.

PERSONALS

RYE—Sublet Summer Season—furnished house, 8 rooms, garage, situated in 52-acre private park near beach. Harvey Williams, 17 Hix Ave., Telephone Rye 2259-J.

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WRITER would like to combine, college man trip abroad this summer. Share expenses. Box 316-D.

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PERSONALS

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ECONOMICS WRITER NEW ENGLAND: Revisit to your camel and my Flemish group recalled pleasant comradeship. Is invitation for tea on Madison Avenue still open? Lady Knickerbocker, Box 314-D.

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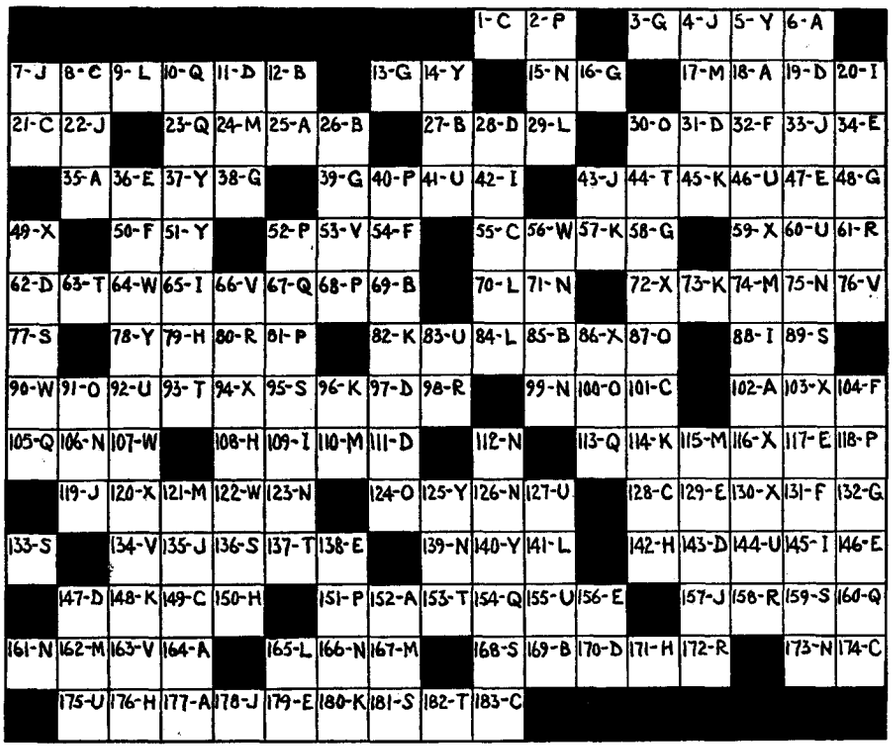
Double-Crostics: No. 273

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (second edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 15 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Leader of the Gileadites (Judges: XI.)
B. Call to witness.
C. Turgid, inflated (comp.)
D. Modern belief in mental healing (2 wds.)
E. Mood of arrogance (2 wds.) (fig.)
F. President of Germany (1919-25.)
G. Novel by W. G. Simms (1835.)
H. Affluence.
I. Instrument for measuring angles.
J. Overreached.
K. Final, conclusive.
L. Sharp (obs.)
M. Selective.
N. Pseudonym once adopted by Scott (last name.)
O. Related on mother's side.
P. Brooks.
Q. Highbred.
R. Strong jerks (colloq.)
S. Fragments, shreds.
T. Substance used for curdling.
U. Raid.
V. Irish patriot (1778-1803.)
W. Simpleton.
X. Short-legged German dog.
Y. Scene of Joshua's address to the tribes.

WORDS

A.	177	25	152	6	35	102	18	164						
B.	169	27	69	26	12	85								
C.	8	1	183	128	174	149	21	55	101					
D.	19	31	147	62	143	170	28	11	111	97				
E.	36	179	156	138	146	129	47	34	117					
F.	131	50	32	104	54									
G.	38	16	39	13	132	3	58	48						
H.	142	176	79	150	171	108								
I.	88	145	42	109	20	65								
J.	178	4	22	157	135	7	119	43	33					
K.	45	73	180	96	57	114	82	148						
L.	70	9	165	29	141	84								
M.	167	17	24	162	74	110	121	115						
N.	99	112	106	126	123	161	173	15	139	166	71	75		
O.	87	30	100	124	91									
P.	118	40	2	68	81	52	151							
Q.	113	67	23	154	10	160	105							
R.	98	158	61	80	172									
S.	89	168	181	159	133	77	136	95						
T.	153	63	44	182	93	137								
U.	144	127	92	46	175	41	83	60	155					
V.	53	134	66	76	163									
W.	90	56	122	64	107									
X.	72	103	59	116	94	120	86	130	49					
Y.	14	140	37	5	125	51	78							

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THIS week's pleasantest anecdote is from two professors from McGill University who are on tour. Driving through Brooklyn toward The Fantods they got lost, and inquired the way from a colored citizen. The latter was interested in their Quebec license plate and started to spell it out. "Q-U-E-B," he pronounced—"you gemmun come from Cuba."

☞Here at The Fantods one of Old Q's most valued possessions is an original painting (of a red barn in Iowa) given him some years ago by its painter Grant Wood. ☞Mr. Wood is one of the few artists who instinctively remember the feel of fresh-ploughed clods on bare feet, and the patina the ploughshare gives them. ☞That memory he unconsciously conveys in much of his best painting. ☞We always remember what Messrs. Rinard and Pyla said in a catalogue of Grant Wood's pictures shown in 1935 at the Lakeside Press in Chicago: "In the middle of his stubborn chin is an amazing cleft. In youth he raised a spectacular patch of pink whiskers . . . the cleft parted the whiskers in the middle, giving the effect of an open-face peanut butter sandwich." So we think of Grant Wood almost every time we eat peanut butter (fairly often).

☞We had already written the above memo on Grant Wood when we received from him a very timely cartoon, reproduced herewith. ☞It leads us to suppose that Mr. Wood has lately been hooded with an honorary degree.

☞It was notably enterprising of the London *Times* to issue its "United States Number," on sale here June 8 and sold immediately at a premium. It included a terse and able article by J. W. Krutch on "Contemporary American Literature." Among recent writers, Mr. Krutch mentioned Pearl Buck, Ernest Hemingway and Erskine Caldwell as the novelists of most "original and substantial talent." Of the younger poets he chose Archibald MacLeish and Mark Van Doren as outstanding figures. ☞We were much pleased by the nomination of Mr. MacLeish as Librarian of Congress; his presumable ignorance of bibliothecary "technics" seems to us all to the good. Ten thousand people can easily be hired who know all about the Dewey Decimals. MacLeish has imagination. ☞And the loyal throng who believe Max Beerbohm *hors concours* among the seraphim illuminati of contemporary prose threw up their sweaty nightcaps in honor of his knighthood.

"Pocket Books"

☞One of the pleasures of an exciting week was the arrival from Mr. Bob de Graff of the first ten of his attractively bound and burnished marsupial reprints at 25 cents. ☞We say marsupial because Pocket Books (386 Fourth Ave., N. Y. C.) have chosen a spectacled reading kangaroo, with book in pouch, as their emblem. ☞The series begins with ten titles, size 4⅛ x 6½ inches, clearly printed on a light but tough and opaque paper, gaily bound in aromatic "Dura-gloss." The ten books chosen by Mr. de Graff (after presumably assiduous poll of the trade and the lurking public?) are an interesting biochemistry of our present tastes: *Lost Horizon, Bambi, The Murder of Roger Ackroyd, Wuthering Heights, Enough Rope* (verses by Dorothy Parker), *Topper, The Way of All Flesh, Wake Up and Live, The Bridge of San Luis Rey,* and *Five Tragedies by Shakespeare.* ☞We have a strong hunch as to which of these will sell best, but we shall write out our guess privately and deposit in the Cupaloy Capsule in Flushing for at least 12 months. ☞In the contemporary volumes Mr. de Graff includes a brief bibliographical note mentioning date of first publications, etc. ☞The *Wuthering Heights* and the Shakespeare also contain some modest *materia critica*: in the Shakespeare each play is introduced by those two noble kinsprits John Masefield and J. Walker McSpadden. ☞But in *The Way of All Flesh* our pocketeer has forgotten to enter any data. It is useful to the casual reader to know that that singular and vastly entertaining book was not (and could not be) published until after its author's death. ☞These however are minor and merely scholarly quibbles. Old Q is always keen about any scheme to mitigate the cost of books. The enormous success of the Penguin editions in Britain and elsewhere should be a good omen for this venture; if its editorship is something better than helterskelter it will do enormously well. ☞Good evidence of its possibilities was Macy's initial order, 10,000 copies.

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R.W.E.

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